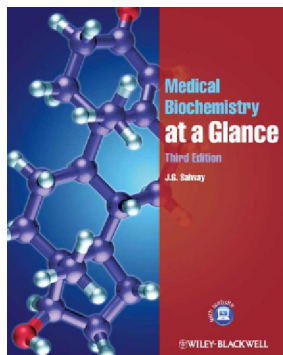


## Salway J. G.: Medical Biochemistry at a Glance, 3rd Edition

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**Bibliography**  
Medical Biochemistry at a Glance,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. J. G. Salway  
Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester,  
UK, 2012, pp 176  
ISBN 978-0-470-65451-4  
USD 42.95, EUR 34,90

My first thought on reading the title was that any text attempting to offer biochemistry in a format that was digestible “at a glance” was likely to be biting off far more than anybody could hope to chew. My final thought on reading this book is that the author has written an excellent condensed revision guide to medical biochemistry, though I am still not sure that many individuals could take much of the information in “at a glance” given the many complex biochemical pathways published within. This is, however, undeniably useful for reference. In fact, the author in his preface to this edition is quite right in offering students two learning objectives: to understand (rather than memorise), and to recognise the amount of detail required to fully understand the subject. This third edition includes in its 10 “parts”, full-colour illustrations, relevant content updates throughout, a dedicated part on molecular biology and links to a companion website that includes questions and answers for self-assessment. The book is clearly geared towards students of medicine, but students of allied healthcare and

science subjects would also find this book valuable in their studies and revision for examinations. Similarly, academics, clinicians and healthcare scientists will probably find it a useful reference source and teaching aid. Readers familiar with other titles published in the “at a glance” series may find this a little different, given the complexities of the contents, but the format is largely the same.

Each of the 10 “parts” of this book contains a number of succinctly written 2-page topics, which are well structured on the whole and include in the text emboldened words picked up in the index. It is perhaps the diagrams, rather than the text, that require more scrutiny than a glance to comprehend. These are ubiquitously complex—certainly unavoidably so, without doing disservice to the material—with some very small text in order to shrink these into the pages. Unfortunately, a mixture of very small font sizes and some choice of colouring leaves some parts of these diagrams almost unreadable without magnification—and my eyes are relatively young!

In contrast the companion website of this edition is of rather little use in developing the context, or even to allow expansion of the diagrams, though the self-assessment questions referred to above might, in principle at least, be helpful to students. However, in my opinion the format of these makes the exercise pointless except for only the most disciplined and careful of readers, as the answers are given directly below each question with no option to hide them. Unfortunately, the answers are so close to the questions that peripheral vision alone is enough to read them while attempting to concentrate on each question.

Finally, back to the book, and this edition is a welcome update to earlier versions of the same title. Despite my quibbles over text size and companion website faults, this is a book that is well written, with carefully chosen informative material, which I am sure will be widely used by those mentioned above.

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