

Book Review

“For it’s true that book reviews and not obituaries are the real graveyard of publishing”

Much before I was asked to review the book “Surgical Gastroenterology”; (vol.1 and 2) second edition 2014 (2008 clinical GI Surgery), Paras Medical Publisher, DVD ISBN:978-81-8191-398-2, (Set price 3995); I was already having it on my bookshelf. I have read the entire book with deep interest. I feel proud for Dr. Sanjiv Haribhakti, already a stalwart in this field, for coming up with first ever Indian version of a text book on the specialty of gastrointestinal surgery.

It is a comprehensive textbook that aims to meet the needs of gastrointestinal surgeons in higher training and practicing consultants for a contemporary account of this sub-specialty that is relevant to the surgical practice. It is a practical reference source incorporating the current information on management issues, operative procedures and recent developments; Text is presented in a concise and easily digestible format, with up-to date content relevant to the modern day surgical practice. The text is supported by interesting and informative pictures and diagrams. What is particularly appealing are the boxes, which provide the reader with the much needed information and the bullet point format to compliment the text. This feature does not interfere with its readability.

The topics are chosen for their clinical relevance, written by contemporary practicing clinicians and readers are provided with highlighted summary of key points and evidence-based recommendations.

Majority of the illustrations are clear, albeit occasional minor editing misses (e.g. fig 150.9 A and B; Picture icon for the chapter on spleen does not figure spleen!!)

Most of the topics as one would expect are covered, with other useful additions.

Prominent are chapters on respiratory physiotherapy, chronic abdominal pain, abdominal compartment syndrome, energy sources, CT scan, molecular basis of disease, esophageal pH and manometry, surgical site infections, peritonitis, bariatric and metabolic surgery, obstructive defecation syndrome, fecal incontinence, SOLs of liver, liver trauma, Liver transplantation, congenital anomalies of pancreas, pancreatic cancer, insulinoma, surgery for pancreas, GI hemorrhage, cirrhosis and PHT, surgery for PHT, single site surgery, laparoscopic hernia surgery and hernia. The highlight of the book is the chapters on liver transplant that underlines the vast experience of the experts in this field. I am not very convinced about inclusion of some of the allied chapters (e.g. ideal operation theater), though well written, for a subject that needed more focus and depth into the specialty. The order of arrangement of the chapters lacked flow and could have been better structured. Some chapters are presented in note book form. The depth and content in the chapters could have been more uniform even though it would have entailed more pages into the book. For example the chapter on CT (50 pages) vs the chapter on MRI (8 pages) that is no way less advanced than CT. Reinsertion of some content s could have been avoided and few chapters could have been combined.

Never the less this book is well written, beautifully illustrated and appropriately referenced. The operative technique descriptions are clear and concise. Some chapters include pearls and pitfalls which readers will find useful. Each chapter concludes with a useful summary of the key learning points.

This concise book, through its clarity and ‘hitting the point’ structure, manages to be of use to surgeons, trainees and any person involved with surgical gastroenterology.

Furthermore, the book comes with a DVD that further supports the learning experience of the reader.

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