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Book Review

Fitzpatrick's Dermatology in General Medicine. Klaus Wolff, Lowell A Goldsmith, Stephen I Katz, Barbara A Gilhebre, Amy S Paller, David J Leffell, editors; 7th edition; 2008. Mc Graw Hill Medical. ISBN 978-0-07-146690-5. Pages 2402 (Two volumes). Price INR 8600/-

Medicine, it is said, is an ever-changing science. With cutting edge research and new clinical experience exponentially expanding the realms of medical science, there is a felt need to continually update our knowledge base. 'Fitzpatrick' has remained a highly respected textbook, a 'Bible' in the practice of Dermatology. Even since the first edition of this textbook was released in 1971, newer editions have been introduced earlier than the previous ones; every five years now compared to every eight years earlier; a measure of the accelerating pace of change.

The new edition is different from the previous one right from the moment it is opened. The arrangement and organization of various sections and their contents have been completely reshaped. Basic sciences, which occupied a section of its own in the previous edition, are segregated into its components which are now clubbed along with their sections of relevance, bringing with it the advantage of continuity. Some reshuffling, for instance, moves Kawasaki's Syndrome from the section on 'Bacterial Diseases' to the section on 'Inflammatory and Vascular Disorders'. Section-end references are truncated and readers are directed to a website for the rest, thus re-appropriating premium print space for text.

Along with updating of previous concepts, new chapters on

Public Health in Dermatology, Complementary and Alternative Dermatology, Drug Interactions,

Dermatology in Bioterrorism and Biological Warfare have been added, underscoring globally emerging newer advances in Dermatology which the new age dermatologists should be aware of.

Three column text, new stand-out font, different color codes for headings and sub headings, numerous clinical and histopathological color plates, self explanatory figurative representations, graphs, flow-charts and tables make the assimilation of the vast data a cake walk. 'At A Glance' windows and boxes summarizing the differential diagnoses and treatment protocols give a fish-eye view of various aspects of dermatological disorders, something that is not only crisp and precise but also relevant and easy to remember. The reader gets a ready reference point with flip-book views of section name and representative thumbnail pictures on the free margins of both sides of every page.

In a nutshell, this marvelous textbook replete with latest looks, is a completely revised and updated edition with great clarity and easily 'digestible' reference material. With this edition, 'Fitzpatrick' has further cemented its place in the practice of Dermatology.

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