

Tropical dermatopathology

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This book is in reality an atlas that includes most common conditions that all Indian dermatologists encounter in their daily practice.

It is a very well written book with brief and succinct descriptions of the diseases covered and is richly illustrated by numerous good quality clinical photographs and photomicrographs. While the clinical photographs are uniformly of good quality, the same cannot be said of the photomicrographs that vary from good to poor.

The initial chapters deal with the techniques of obtaining optimal skin biopsies, patterns in clinical and pathological dermatology and a short dictionary of dermatopathology terms. This last, however, is too random in its inclusion of terms and includes also clinical terms like Auspitz sign and Koebner phenomenon that seem out of place in a glossary of dermatopathology terms.

The chapters dealing with the diseases have on the right hand page clinical descriptions, etiopathogenesis and treatment modalities of the various diseases which is followed by brief descriptions of the

histopathological findings. The corresponding left hand page has photographs illustrating the clinical findings and photomicrographs of the histological findings. This makes for easy reading and comprehensive understanding of the disease being considered. The clinical descriptions are very informative and comprehensive and will be of great use to pathologists not familiar with skin diseases. However, the same cannot be said of the description of the pathology which is very skimpy and often very inadequate and can in no way help any one in making a histological diagnosis of the disease under consideration. It gives a feeling that this is essentially a book for pathologists with emphasis of the clinical aspects of the diseases rather than a text of pathology!

Ample space has been devoted to the common infections that are seen in our country and the chapters on tuberculosis of skin especially are very well written. Other topics like neoplasms and genetic diseases that are not restricted to tropical regions have also been included probably to give a sense of completeness.

I expect this book to be useful to postgraduates as well as consultants in both dermatology and pathology and recommend that a copy be obtained at the earliest. At the marked price of Rs. 388/- it is a steal. Practising dermatopathologists, however, may feel a trifle disappointed.

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