

Diseases of the Ear, Nose & Throat in Children: An Introduction and Practical Guide

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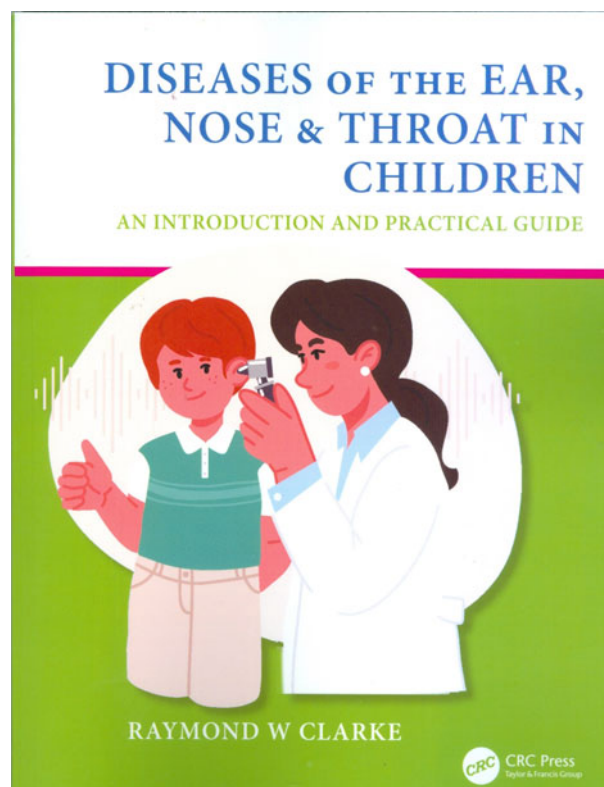
It came as a nice surprise when this book arrived through my mailbox, rather than just onto my personal computer monitor, as I had expected. As with many others, these publishers prefer to offer an e-book to reviewers, rather than sacrifice the forests to produce something that my generation can actually read. They do make exceptions, however, and I am grateful. Knowing the author and his lifetime contribution to paediatric ENT practice and training, I just had to see this textbook.

It is subtitled as 'An Introduction and Practical Guide', and the author's Preface modestly describes it as a 'little book' that fills 'the lack of a short, easy-to-read account'. I agree that 149 pages is not massive, but there is very comprehensive coverage, with key points, links, references for further reading and colour illustrations (some very familiar from earlier standard textbooks).

Early in the Introduction, the author reminds us that 'ORL doctors perform more surgical interventions in children than any other surgical discipline', a message that merits constant repetition at the various surgical colleges. This opening chapter continues with a concise, but remarkably thorough, coverage of the provision of children's services, anaesthesia, analgesia and consent.

'The paediatric consultation' chapter also has its pearls of wisdom. Read the notes (probably off a monitor these days) before admitting the patient, and read up on any presented syndrome, just before they come in. Knowledge of normal developmental milestones, child protection issues and functional disorders closed a chapter that now had me convinced that this is a much more profound book than its size and subtitle suggest.

Each of the following chapters is devoted to a particular diagnosis rather than symptom complex, with titles such as 'Balance disorders', 'The obstructed airway' and 'The salivary glands'. The Introduction conceded the absence of implantational otology, but then chapter 12 actually gives nice coverage



of bone conducting devices and cochlear implantation (enough to get one through most viva examinations anyway).

A closing chapter on coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) we must hope will lose its relevance, but the last paragraphs of the book are thought-provoking, entitled 'Children's ORL Post Covid'. The long-term effects on education, social development after isolation, lowered immunity and prolonged hospital waiting lists are disturbing. It reminded me of a concern expressed by our local neonatologists that premature babies were passing months after birth without seeing an unmasked human facial expression.

This book indeed proves to be an invaluable revision for our exit examination, but it also has much to offer the general ENT surgeon, the paediatrician and those in primary care, and it may well inspire the more senior medical student. This is a book packed with practical common-sense tips gained from a lifetime of super-specialisation.

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