

Atlas of Emergency Medicine. 2nd ed. Knoop KJ, Stack L, Storrow A, editors. McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd. \$293. 705 pp. ISBN 0-07-135294-5

The *Atlas of Emergency Medicine* is both a reference book and a pictorial atlas of visual diagnosis in emergency medicine. With approximately 700 colour photos and radiographic images, it is the most comprehensive visual guide available for emergency physicians. This is the book's 2nd edition, and the editors have expanded it by 200 pages, including new sections on HIV, Forensics, Wounds and Soft Tissue Injuries, and Ultrasound.

The Atlas is well organized, containing pictures, radiographs, microscopic reproductions and instructive diagrams. The overall content is split into 2 parts: Part 1 is a regional anatomy approach and Part 2 highlights specialty areas, including Pediatrics, Environmental Med-

icine, Forensics and Microscopic Findings. Each visual diagnosis is accompanied by a brief text description, with the following subheadings: Associated clinical features, Differential diagnosis, Emergency department treatment and disposition, and Clinical pearls. The chapters are concise and easy to scan, which makes them practical — not unlike a study guide for quick review and refreshment. The Clinical pearls are interesting, but these often read more like anecdotes than science. In several cases I wondered how the authors chose them and where they came from. References would be appreciated.

Overall, the quality is excellent, although there are some minor errors and a few of the photos are sub-optimal (e.g., it was difficult to see several of the intraoral lesion images). Furthermore, in some cases I wondered what the picture added to the text. For example, the chapter on thoracotomy fea-

tures a picture of an open chest and the section on tension pneumothorax shows a needle protruding from a chest. These images did little to improve my understanding of the topics.

This is a great reference book to have in the emergency department. It is clearly organized and allows readers to quickly look up conditions for clinical and educational purposes. Its main strength is the high quality photographs, which will help clinicians and learners with key visual findings seen in emergency medicine. Finally, its succinct, easy-to-read summaries make it an ideal supplement to any emergency textbook. If a picture is worth a thousand words, this book says a lot.

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