

## Book report

# Comprehensive respiratory medicine

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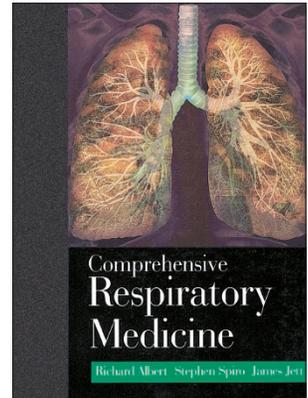
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Albert RK, Spio SG, Jett JR (Eds): *Comprehensive Respiratory Medicine*. St Louis, MO: Mosby Inc; 1999. 752 pp. ISBN 0-7234-3118-3



*Comprehensive Respiratory Medicine* provides a concise, well-organized and systematic review of respiratory diseases and their management. As the editors indicate, it is written for students, house officers, trainees in pulmonary medicine and practicing physicians, but not for the respiratory medicine scientist. It does not contain the depth of basic science discussion of specific topics that is found in some of the other textbooks of pulmonary medicine. The word concise best describes the overall text, for the breath of the text is large but the 78 chapters are covered in only 752 pages. The presentation is clearly an international perspective of respiratory medicine; the 120 authors contributing to the book are from 10 different countries.

The book is divided into 21 different sections of varying length and breadth.

Section 1 'Structure and function' does a very good job of covering the spectrum of imaging techniques along with physiology and host differences. The first chapter on 'Imaging' by Hansell and Padley and the chapter on 'Physiology' by Culver are particularly well organized, providing in-depth discussion with outstanding tables and graphics.

Section 2 'Techniques and indications' covers bronchoscopy and other diagnostics techniques, and Section 3 'Principles of respiratory care' covers airway care, invasive and noninvasive ventilation, and hemodynamic monitoring. Although this third section is short (48 pages), the authors do a very good job of covering the topics presented. Section 4 'An approach to respiratory symptoms' includes short, independent chapters on cough, dyspnea, hemoptysis and chest pain. All of these topics are covered well in a concise manner. Section 5 'Infectious disease' is divided into three areas; community-acquired pneumonia, pneumonia in

the immunocompromised host, and nosocomial infections. The 13 chapters allocated to these topics review and highlight the specific issues of interest in each area. Section 6 'Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and the lung' is a two-chapter section presenting a detailed review of the total scope of issues relating to AIDS and the lung.

Section 7 'Airway disease' is a particularly good section of the book, addressing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, and cystic fibrosis. It contains a subsection on pharmacology of the airway, with an outstanding chapter on 'Beta-agonists, anticholinergics, and other nonsteroid drugs' by Barns. Section 8 consists of just one comprehensive chapter on 'Lung tumors'. Section 9 presents diffuse lung disease, including chapters on idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, extrinsic allergic alveolitis, and sarcoidosis. Section 10 is devoted to pulmonary vascular disorders, vasculitides, and hemorrhage.

The remaining 10 sections of the book cover pulmonary manifestations of systemic conditions, occupational and environmental lung disease, pleural disease, management of chest trauma, the acute respiratory distress syndrome, toxic inhalational lung injury, chest wall disorders, disorders of the mediastinum, disorders of ventilatory control, drugs and the lung, and lung transplantation. These topics are covered in a span of 26 chapters, of special note: 'Bone marrow transplantation' by Crawford, 'Occupational asthma' by Chan-Young and Malo, 'Pleural effusion' by Loddenkemper, 'Acute respiratory distress syndrome' by Gattinoni, Pelosi, Brazzi and Valenza, 'Obstructive sleep apnea' by Atwood and Strollo, and 'Drugs and the lung' by White.

The most outstanding features of this book are the tables and graphics included. Each author has ensured that specific areas of most interest are presented visually. The authors

have succeeded in achieving an eye-catching volume that makes it easy to identify important facts and issues, and to appreciate the pitfalls of management and the controversies sounding each area.

The biggest drawback of this book is that it was published in 1999. As a result, it is already 4 years old and, of course, lacks issues and changes in practice that have occurred over this 4-year period. However, in spite of this concern, I would highly recommend this text as a basic textbook on respiratory medicine that anyone from students to practicing physicians engaged in respiratory medicine would find extremely useful.

### **Competing interests**

None declared.