

Rohkamm R. Color Atlas of Neurology. New York (NY): Thieme; 2004. 448 pages; ISBN 1-58890-191-2/3-13-130931-8; price: US\$ 39.00

Field: Neurology.

Format: Paperback/flexibook.

Audience: Students, neurologists, and other physicians and medical professionals.

Purpose: As an aid to the detection and diagnosis, understanding and visualization of various symptoms and signs of neurologic diseases.

Content: The book consists of 4 chapters and an appendix. Chapter 1 describes the fundamentals of the anatomy and physiology of the skull, meninges, cerebrospinal fluid, blood vessels and the organization of the central and peripheral nervous systems. The chapter spans over "only" 37 pages, but manages to impart the most important details, with clear illustrations. Especially I would like to point out the clear visualization of the brachial and lumbar plexuses. Chapter 2 covers the normal and abnormal function of the nervous system. An overview is given of the reflexes, motor control and execution, the cerebellar and vestibular function, olfactory, gustatory, and visual system, as well as the senses and sensations connected to cranial nerves, the limbic and autonomic system. Also, a detailed explanation on the pathology and major syndromes for every normal function or pathway is given. The disturbances of consciousness and higher cortical function, such as speech, writing, and memory, are briefly explained. After such an introduction on symptoms, Chapter 3 brings an overview on brain and spinal disorders, peripheral neuropathies, and myopathies. It is, understandably, the largest chapter in the book, where everything mentioned earlier in the book comes together into a large,

easy-to-comprehend compendium. Disorders and their clinical manifestations are meticulously labeled and elaborately drawn, just as is the whole book. Chapter 4 details in only 5 pages the art of history taking and physical examination, neurophysiological and neuropsychological testing, and imaging and biopsy procedures. It is the only chapter without visual aids. The appendix is, arguably, the most useful part of the book for students and other medical professionals, especially those in training. It brings tables and algorithms with detailed information, as well as outlines and working aids. Appendix concludes with the list of references and a detailed Index.

Highlights: It is difficult to choose a single quality of this book, but I would say it is the illustrations, or rather the combination of illustrations and relevant text, making all topics understandable "at a glance."

Limitations: As with any book covering topics in medical sciences, the limitations are the ever-changing discoveries, growth in clinical experience and knowledge. The author himself makes a "caveat emptor" especially in regard to the dosage, schedule or contraindications of drugs.

Related reading: The Appendix has a detailed list of references, making it easy to find all the information on the background of covered topics. As this is an atlas, or rather a compendium, related reading on any topic can be found in either monographies or specialized scientific journals.

Antea Topić