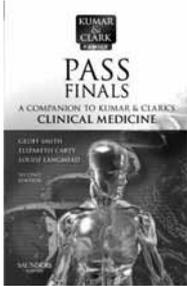


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Pass Finals: A companion to Kumar and Clark's Clinical Medicine, 2nd Edition.

Geoff Smith, Elizabeth Carty, Louise Langmead
Saunders Elsevier
2008
NZRRP: \$65

During the clinical years, most medical students grow to love a certain textbook, so much so that it becomes an extension of our bodies during fourth and fifth year, and our saving grace during finals.

Whether it's the Crash Course series, the good old Oxford Handbook, or Kumar and Clark, we all have that one textbook that carries us throughout our time in medical school.

For me that book is Kumar and Clark's Clinical Medicine, which is great for the naive fourth year still confused about the difference between interstitial fibrosis and emphysema but not quite so helpful when said student is now in fifth year and in dire need of some quick-fire review. Sure, us die-hard Kumar and Clark fans may have fantasised about spending our summer making study notes for every chapter of this 10cm-thick textbook in preparation for fifth year finals, but alas, fantasies remain fantasies for a reason.

And that's when "Pass Finals: A companion to Kumar and Clark's Clinical Medicine" comes into play.

"Pass Finals" is based on Kumar and Clark and therefore comprehensive,

but succinct. This handbook-style text, only 2.5cm thick, is perfect for those with sufficient background knowledge who need to sharpen up on the necessary details to do well in exam situations.

There are sixteen chapters covering core information on basic sciences and disease, with each chapter dedicated to a different area of Clinical Medicine: Clinical Pharmacology, Radiology, Clinical Chemistry, Infectious Diseases, Respiratory Medicine, Cardiology, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Rheumatology, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Renal Medicine, Haematology, Oncology and Genetic Disease, Neurology, Psychological Medicine, and Statistics and Evidence-Based Medicine.

Each chapter includes some background on the system covered, review of necessary examination skills, discussion of relevant investigations, and then onto the diseases in question. All of the text is in bullet-point format, supplemented by clear, simple tables and diagrams, and with references to the corresponding pages of Kumar and Clark (6th Edition) for further reading should any serious gaps in knowledge be discovered. Best of all, at the end of each chapter are a few pages of self-assessment questions (with answers at the back of the text), which will come in handy closer to finals, when MCQs become highly sought-after commodities.

There are also three chapters at the beginning of the book giving helpful tips on sitting medical school examinations in general: "How to pass medical finals," "Question types in medical finals," and "OSCEs." I found the chapter devoted to OSCEs especially helpful. It gave some background on how they are run, general advice on what to do/what not to do, as well as a collection of common OSCE scenarios.

Overall "Pass Finals" is undoubtedly an ideal review book which medical students will find invaluable closer to finals. Regardless of whether you are already a Kumar and Clark fan, or have always been put-off by the sheer thickness of the full textbook, this succinct yet thorough companion will help keep those study-prep freak-outs down to a minimum come October.

