

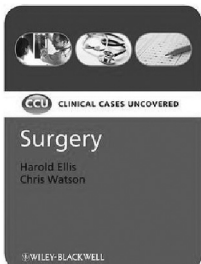
FEATURE : BOOK REVIEW

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Cam Bringans

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Cam is a 4th year medical student at Waikato hospital (University of Auckland). He is a Kiwi with a Canadian accent and loves coffee, books, sport and watching the Westpac chopper land.



Clinical Cases Uncovered - Surgery

Harold Ellis, Chris Watson
Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell
2008.

Those moments when years of anatomy and physiology study help you make sense of a real patient's problems are as rare as they are rewarding. Clinical Cases Uncovered (CCU): Surgery is a small textbook that was created to help medical students bridge the overwhelming knowledge gap between the lecture theatre and the operating theatre. CCU is unlike most conventional medical teaching which tends to be system focused. This text parallels the way we learn on our attachments by following a patient from presentation through to diagnosis and to treatment.

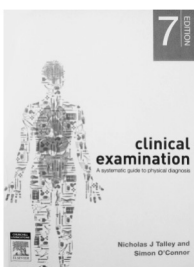
This book uses 123 case histories, drawn from the authors' distinguished careers, to give students a useful understanding of surgical diseases. The cases cover the bread and butter of all general surgical conditions, as well as some common conditions for the more specialised branches of surgery. Each case starts with a key pathological image (e.g. bulging eyes or a perianal abscess) and a case summary that is similar to the way we present a patient to our team. The text is organised around key questions that should nudge your thinking towards the correct diagnosis, the next investigation or the optimal treatment. Each question is then followed by a paragraph of discussion. Although this book's primary intent is to help you in the ward rather than to boost test scores, there are 40 MCQs and 10 SAQs at the end of the book that help to consolidate your knowledge. CCU's best asset is its diagrams that are used to help students understand disease concepts and radiology findings.

This book may seem expensive (\$54 NZD from Book Depository) however I found it invaluable as it helped me understand my 6 week general surgery run. And compare it to the price that medical students pay for each day in the hospital \$67 (\$14.5 K over 43 weeks), the book is a steal. The goal of this book is not to teach you how to perform emergency laparotomies, but rather to come away from your run in the knowledge that you understand the management of common surgical conditions.

Amelia Shin

1st Year House Officer
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Amelia Shin is a first year house officer working in North Shore Hospital. She is currently on her journey to find the right balance between work and life...as most RMOs do!



Clinical Examination: a systematic guide to physical diagnosis

Nicholas J Talley, Simon O'Connor
Publisher: Elsevier Australia
7th Edition

This is the seventh edition of Talley & O'Connor which has always been medical students' survival guide to clinical examination. During my clinical years I myself have made good use out of the 6th edition of this textbook. With photos to illustrate various clinical tests and observations, it is quite easy to understand how you are supposed to perform a clinical examination. What I also found useful was differential diagnoses for various clinical signs. These strong points still feature in the latest 7th edition; difference is that there has been some addition and elaboration of content. For example, the new edition contains detailed explanation about thorough social history taking. More importantly however is that 7th edition does deal with specific issues to consider and signs to look out for when examining an elderly

patient – this is increasingly important as medical professionals deal with increasing number of aging population. What I also found useful is that the latest edition discusses assessment of death as well as rapid screening physical examination method – these two may be of less relevance for example for medical long cases where one has to be thorough, however is certainly relevant in clinical practice.

Talley & O'Connor still remains a go-to-textbook for medical students. If one was to decide between 6th or 7th edition though, I would certainly choose the latest edition in light of additional information that are included in the latter; unless of course you can acquire one of older editions for free, which works to advantage of students' budget.