Book reviews

Current Therapy in Allergy, Immunology and Rheumatology. Vol 3. By L M Lichtenstein, A S Fauci. Pp. 354. £46.50. Dekker: Ontario, Canada (distributed by McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead). 1988. ISBN 1-5566-4021-8.

This is a practical manual and deserves the place it has achieved in American medicine. From a conventional rheumatological point of view the chapters on rheumatic and connective tissue diseases offer a straightforward approach to the most important factors in treatment. There is a good and succinct account of the advantages and snags of rest, aspirin treatment, the use of splints, metatarsal bars, and all the currently used drug regimens. Reiter's syndrome, Sjögren's syndrome, and the cutaneous complications of connective tissue diseases are well discussed. There are also sections on drug reactions, renal problems, and amyloidosis.

The reason for the combination of rheumatological and other immunological problems is another matter. As of January 1988, between one and two million people in the United States were thought to have been infected with HIV, and interest in the treatment of immunological diseases has been stimulated by a sharp increase in acquired immunodeficiency disease. This helps to explain the importance attached to all aspects of clinical immunology in the United States, and this book also provides a synoptic view of the treatment of conditions ranging from allergic rhinitis to rheumatoid arthritis, from urticaria to interstitial nephritis, and from pulmonary, aspergillosis to transplant rejection.

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Advanced Exercises in Diagnostic Radiology—Rheumatic Disorders. L F Layfer, J Petasnick, R S Katz. Pp. 194. £18.50. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: Sidcup, Kent. 1989. ISBN 0-7216-2385-9.

Essentially a collection of exercises designed to teach basic rheumatological radiology to the novice, this small book follows the style of Lucy Squires, whose series of *Exercises in Radiology* has received wide acclaim.

An introductory section outlines an approach to and the main radiological features of the various rheumatic diseases. Fifty nine cases follow with brief descriptions of the findings, a résumé of the disease processes, and even hints on treatment.

The book concentrates almost exclusively on plain films. Largely the illustrations are of acceptable quality, with few typographic errors. Some terminology is quaint, such as 'metatarsal joints'. There is no bibliography.

'Advanced' this book is not, good basic teaching it is. I would have liked localised views of individual diseased joints rather than panoramic hand x rays, preferably with arrows to emphasise the principal findings. It is not a reference text, purely a self learning exercise to be followed by deeper reading. It should be included in the

libraries of departments responsible for teaching undergraduates and novices about skeletal imaging. It is not expensive, but has limited life expectancy for personal use and may not be seen as a vital individual purchase.

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Handbook of Animal Models for the Rheumatoid Diseases. Vols 1, 2. Eds. Robert A Greenwald and Herbert S Diamond. Pp. 240, 214. £149.50. Wolfe Medical: London. 1988. ISBN 0-8493-2988-4, 0-8493-2989-2.

Animal models of arthritis have proved useful for investigating possible pathogenic mechanisms of human arthritides and for testing potential therapeutic agents. As far as I am aware no volume collating studies on animal models of arthritis from disparate sources has been published so far, and the appearance of the new handbooks would therefore appear timely. The handbooks do not set out to discuss in detail the mechanisms underlying the various animal models. Rather, they are intended to provide the reader with the information necessary to set up each model and to choose which model would be most appropriate for their needs. In addition, the books seek to provide descriptions of particular techniques, such as joint injection, methods of assessing joint change, and methods of anaesthesia. I examined these claims in various ways and the authors will be pleased to hear that the books passed the tests with flying colours. For example, one of my colleagues wished to find a suitable in vivo system to test the effects of a novel growth factor. He found that the books quickly enabled him to choose an appropriate model. I attempted to find descriptions of a number of techniques and was usually rewarded.

As would be expected there are chapters on adjuvant, type II collagen, antigen and bacterial induced arthritis, but in addition there are a number of other nuggets with chapters on arthritis following irradiation, the air pouch model of inflammation, and models of connective tissue disease. Similarly, in the second volume there are descriptions and critical assessments of the by now standard models of osteoarthritis together with fascinating chapters on crystal induced arthritis and articular and periarticular calcification. The second volume finishes with a thought provoking chapter on bioethical obligations to animals used in research and techniques of general applicability. At almost £150, the books are unlikely to be purchased by individuals, but I would expect to find them in medical school and pharmaceutical company libraries. I found the print slightly too small for comfort. Apart from that minor criticism, I recommend the book highly to anyone interested in arthritis and congratulate the authors on producing two useful and often fascinating volumes.

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