

## Microbiology Nuts & Bolts: Key Concepts of Microbiology and Infection

D. Garner. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013. ISBN: 978-1484123911, 288 pp (Paperback). £16.64.

This clinically-oriented book is designed to answer the daily questions of healthcare professionals regarding infection. It provides a concise, pocket-sized reference arranged according to medical condition, making it easily accessible when faced with a patient in clinic or on the ward.

The book is divided into six chapters, the first two covering the basic concepts needed to understand the book and infections/microbiology in general. These chapters provide practical tips on requesting microbiological specimens and interpreting results, which will enable readers to get the most out of microbiological tests without overwhelming them with detail. It also gives a useful overview of microbiology as a specialty, which is often under-represented during training as a junior doctor. This book would be an ideal starter for anyone considering a career in infection.

The book continues with a straightforward, easy-to-grasp depiction of the increasingly complex area of infection control. It focuses on commonly encountered scenarios such as root cause analysis and needlestick injuries, and goes on to discuss multidrug-resistant organisms which are of increasing concern in today's society. It provides clear information regarding isolation requirements and their rationale.

A systems-based approach is used to describe clinical scenarios. Brief details are provided on aetiology, clinical features, management and complications. The book

highlights the need for sound history taking and clinical examination details. It does not go into great depth regarding why one may choose a particular antibiotic regime over another, but, by minimising this level of detail, it is able to provide clear guidance on the management of most everyday infections.

The chapter on antibiotics is lengthy in comparison to others, but provides a wealth of information regarding antimicrobial classes, modes of action and spectrum of activity, enabling the reader to understand the rationale behind antimicrobial choice. Discussion of therapeutic drug monitoring and side-effects helps prescribers to manage patients on antibiotics safely. The tables contained in this section are extremely useful and relevant to everyday practice, but the practitioner should bear in mind local guidelines and resistance patterns when referring to them.

The final chapter deals with specific emergency scenarios, emphasising the need to recognise the sick patient and start antibiotics promptly when indicated. The content is laid out in logical manner, easily accessible as a quick reference. The appendix provides useful links to relevant websites, and the accompanying website to this book is a great bonus.

*Microbiology Nuts & Bolts* is a comprehensive yet concise book that would be useful to any healthcare professional managing patients with infections. Its pocket-sized and clinically focused layout makes it a 'must have' survival tool for junior doctors who are expected to understand and manage increasingly difficult clinical problems.

**O Rahama/C Walsh**

## Platelets

A.D. Michelson ed. London: Academic Press/Elsevier, 2013: 3rd edn. ISBN: 978-0-12-387837-3. 1398 pp. \$250.

Since the discovery of platelets in the late 19th century, our knowledge of platelet biology has expanded rapidly. This has led to a deeper understanding of platelet pathology and, consequently, changes in the approach to treatment of platelet-related diseases. *Platelets* brings together this huge mass of information, including contributions from over 120 experts in the field, and provides an excellent resource for those with a special interest in platelet biology.

As in the second edition, the book takes a wonderfully logical approach to presenting the key areas of interest, which include (I) Platelet Biology, (II) Tests of Platelet Function, (III) The Role of Platelets in Disease, (IV) Disorders of Platelet Number and Function, (V) Antiplatelet Therapy, and (VI) Therapy to Increase Platelet Numbers and/or Function. This style makes the book an equally valuable resource for clinicians, researchers and academics.

The third edition incorporates the topics of 'platelet transfusion medicine' and 'gene therapy for platelet disorders' into part VI, where they were previously isolated subjects. This gives the impression of a more concise and naturally flowing text. This latest edition also includes new chapters that focus on emerging areas such as 'platelet microRNAs' and 'making platelets *ex vivo*', keeping the book at the forefront of platelet research.

By bringing together all these distinct areas of platelet biology, pathology and therapy into one definitive text, readers who consider themselves to be platelet specialists will gain an insight into areas that are new or unfamiliar.

As stated in the preface, *Platelets* aims to be a comprehensive and definitive source of knowledge about platelets, an aim which is superbly achieved. The sheer depth and breadth of the content makes the book a 'must have' for anyone interested in platelet medicine or research.

**N. Dempsey-Hibbert**