

Quick Management Guide in Gynaecology

Author : Dr Lee Say Fatt

There is a paucity of medical books written by Malaysian authors. Almost all the books used by medical students, junior doctors, general practitioners and consultants have been written by authors who practise in conditions that are different from that in our local settings. Some of these differences can be marked. Notwithstanding the fact that the knowledge of Medicine is universal, the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious nature of our population has a significant impact upon medical practice.

Gynaecological problems are common in general and hospital practice. As such, this book is much welcomed. One can understand why it is selling well as it is a timely contribution to knowledge about local gynaecological practice.

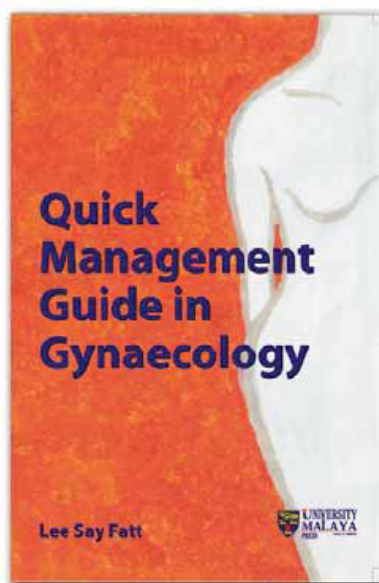
According to its author, Dr Lee Say Fatt, who has the benefit of knowledge about practice in both the public and private health sectors, the objective of the book "is to provide the busy doctor managing women's health with a quick and easy guide in the diagnosis and treatment of common gynaecological conditions". He has accomplished the task he set out for himself well as there is something in this book for every clinician who has to manage gynaecological problems.

The book covers the subject in considerable depth and includes some peripheral issues. The information provided is current at the time of publication. References are available for each chapter to cater for the reader who is keen on further reading.

There are nineteen chapters covering all aspects of clinical gynaecology. They are written in a consistent style, with the pros and cons of various management issues presented in an easily understood and unambiguous manner. Many chapters have treatment options presented in a tabular manner, which is often definitive, a useful feature for the junior doctor and even the senior doctor who has a busy practice.

It is a tribute to the author that the first chapter is on clinical history, physical examination and investigations. The exceptional advances in diagnostics and therapeutics in the past fifty years have resulted in many doctors not bothering about the basics of medical practice i.e. history taking and physical examination.

I always recollect my medical teachers' exhortation to "Listen to



the patient. He is telling you his story." In their time, there were none of the facilities that are available today. Yet they were excellent doctors because they made use of their senses and carried out investigations after having thought carefully about it. We all need to be reminded that there should not be overdependence on technology lest it dehumanizes the patient.

The book would have benefited from a section on the basics of communication as this plays a crucial role in diagnosis and treatment. Furthermore, communication impacts significantly upon the state of the patient-doctor relationship. Poor communication is a well recognized cause of patient dissatisfaction.

In the words of Jerome Groopman, a doctor should "open his mind to a patient and explain what he knows and what he doesn't know, what is firm about his findings and what is still unclear, which symptoms he can account for and which still demand explanation." In addition, surgeons should communicate to their patients, prior to an operation, that "Nothing that you do in surgery is perfect. Everything is a compromise." Groopman emphasized the need to be candid and not to raise too optimistic expectations.

The inclusion of a section on health economics would also have been helpful, as this aspect of Medicine is so important nowadays for the justification of expenditure, irrespective of the type of clinical practice that one is in.

I am confident all doctors, whether current or prospective, and whether junior or senior, will benefit from this book. This is particularly so in those who have a busy practice and have need for a useful source of information. The book is interesting and very readable. After reviewing a book, I often pass it on but I intend to keep this one. ■

Reviewed by Dr Milton Lum
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CORRECTION

"The secret of the care of the patient is in caring for the patient"

Francis Weld Peabody

It has been brought to the attention of the Editorial Board that the quote by Francis Weld Peabody was wrongly printed as "the secret of the care of the patient is in the caring of the patient" (Berita MMA Vol. 38 Issue No. 3; Pages 16, 17 and on the Cover).

The Editorial Board thanks the Vietnamese reader for bringing this error to our attention.

Mail Order details for the book

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by Dr Lee Say Fatt

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With trinkets and ornaments and a shiny ring in his left ear
His masquerade was near perfect and his defect difficult to detect.
His left upper limb, in long sleeve,
was dangling helplessly a result of a motor vehicle accident, while he was riding high on drugs you see!
Many a time he had contemplated suicide because of his deformity
But courage and good sense, prevailed to prevent this calamity.
He resolved to live his life, as best he could, with one good arm in use
to show to the whole world a living example of the dangers of drug abuse.
So with a smile and a "never-care-less" attitude, He got on with his life in peace and solitude.
Such courage in the face of tremendous social pressure is hard to come by and is a god given treasure.
So friends if you think life is difficult in spite of having a sound mind, body and limbs
Just think of Fasha's courage and learn to overcome and manage.
And should you be tempted to try drugs to fit into society, Just let Fasha's trinkets, ornaments and shiny earring
remind you of its inherent dangers and steer clear of such thing!

The Courage of Fasha

by Dr Lung Jien Kien