

Book Review



Radiology at a Glance

Edited by Rajat Chowdhury, Iain Wilson,
Christopher Rofe and Graham Lloyd-Jones
Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010
Price: £21.99

This is a new edition to the 'At a Glance' series and is aimed primarily at students of medicine, radiography and physiotherapy, although would also be useful to students from other health-care professions. In addition, the book could be a good quick reference text for newly qualified junior doctors when they are requesting imaging and interpreting results early in their foundation years.

The book is clearly laid out with plenty of diagrams and images making it easy and enjoyable to read. It has colour text boxes summarizing key points or highlighting facts that may be useful to the reader. The start of the book has a foreword from the President of the Royal College of Radiologists, where he states the book 'manages to cover all aspects of modern imaging' and 'demystifies' modern imaging techniques.

There is a useful abbreviations and terminology page at the start. This is followed by chapters on the physics of key imaging techniques: plain X-ray, fluoroscopy, ultrasound, computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging. Each chapter is a double-page spread containing all the basic information under clear subheadings with diagrams and illustrations to demonstrate concepts. The advantages and disadvantages of each imaging modality are explained. The book then goes on to cover radiation protection and when and how to refer a patient to radiology.

For each mode of imaging mentioned, the later chapters have a checklist for referral, highlighting key information such as patient identification and the importance of stating indications and contraindications for imaging

which are key safety factors. Each modality has an anatomy section if required, for example in the chapter devoted to chest radiography the anatomy of the thorax is outlined and described. Each modality includes plenty of examples along with discussions of the cases shown. The chapters on ultrasound are clear and well-explained but are rather superficial compared with the coverage given to other modalities, and there are fewer example images provided. This would probably meet the needs of a medical student but may not be enough detail for someone with a specialist interest in ultrasound.

There is a chapter demonstrating different imaging options for the cervical spine, showing different approaches and modalities. The final chapters of the book cover interventional radiology and nuclear medicine. Last, four self-test case studies consisting of self-test questions and observed structured clinical examination (OSCE) style questions, all with detailed answers, are likely to be found useful by many students.

I would love to have had this book when I started my clinical years at medical school. It explains basic physics and imaging concepts well and is a good revision aid. I particularly like the relevant example cases and the self-test section which incorporates OSCE style questions, useful in preparing for clinical exams.

In conclusion, this book is good value, easy to read, full of images and diagrams, and covers a lot of topics in a short space while still providing key facts in a clear manner. I would highly recommend this book to medical students in their clinical years and other health-care profession students.

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DOI: 10.1258/ult.2010.010026