

BOOK REVIEW***An Illustrated Handbook of SKIN & STDS with an update on HIV INFECTION, 3rd Edition 1999***

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It is the paradox in the planning of Medical Education in India that the diseases of the largest organ of the body - the skin, is not included as an examination subject in the undergraduate medical curriculum. At the same time 'Ophthalmology' is an examination subject; a speciality no medical graduate will dare to practice until they specialize it further after their graduation. A Nephrologist or Surgeon will not think twice before they prescribe an ointment or cream for a disease of the skin.

A textbook with sufficient number of color pictures and precise description of the lesions with treatment methods is therefore most welcome for first year postgraduate students, in the speciality, practicing clinicians and those septuagenarians who can recognize the lesions but have forgotten the name.

"An Illustrated Handbook of Skin and STDs with an update on HIV Infection" by Dr. Udaykhopkar is one such book. The text is simple, precise and lucid. The pictures are excellent and demonstrate the common skin conditions one will encounter in everyday clinical practice. All who had been in practice for more than a decade may not agree with the treatment methods suggested for certain common conditions, but that is not a serious defect for this otherwise fine book.

It is moderately priced and made of good quality paper. It will be an asset for any Medical Library; Medical students interested in this speciality and those who practice Dermatology and Venereology alone in some distant corner of India.

I hope that the author will continue to update and bring out more elaborate editions for the benefit of future medical students and practitioners of Dermatology and Venereology.

Dr. P Sugathan