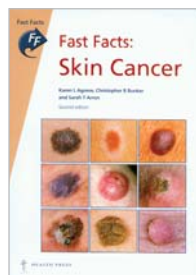


Book review

Skin tumour basics for beginners



Fast facts: skin cancer. 2nd ed. Karen L Agnew, Christopher B Bunker, Sarah T Arron. Oxford, UK: Health Press, 2013 (115 pp, \$25.45). ISBN 978-1908541390.

THIS SHORT MONOGRAPH provides an excellent targeted reference for medical students and general practitioners wanting to develop an interest in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer. This is particularly relevant to Australian medical practice where skin cancer is such an endemic problem.

The authors are well respected dermatologists from New Zealand, the United Kingdom and United States, and bring a wealth of international clinical experience together in this book.

The initial few pages are devoted to a glossary that provides an excellent description of the commonly used terms in this field.

The book is divided into sections on epidemiology, pathogenesis, clinical features and diagnosis, management, prognosis, prevention and future trends. There are many high-quality clinical photographs that illustrate well the clinical descriptions and points made. There is also a list of useful resources at the end, which provides further information and source documentation for some of the facts presented.

The pathogenesis section is perhaps a little complex for most of the target audience. However, it does provide a very good summary and is quite comprehensive, particularly regarding the molecular basis for carcinogenesis.

The book also provides a section on dermoscopy algorithms, which are very useful for beginners in the field. Unfortunately, the size of the monograph does not allow for dermoscopy photographs to accompany the descriptions provided.

At the end of each section there is a highlighted box with the key points and some references. There are also a number of other highlighted sections, such as cancer staging for melanoma, information that should be included in the histopathology report, 5-year survival rates and Breslow thickness, and a checkpoint list for the diagnosis of melanoma.

In summary, this is a good guide for medical students and medical practitioners with an interest in developing further their expertise in the diagnosis and management of skin cancer.

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