
Book Review

Core Anatomy Illustrated

Ian Parkin, Brian M Logan and Mark J McCarthy

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Anatomy as an undergraduate academic discipline has undergone significant changes in the modern medical curriculum. There has been a progressive reduction in the time spent learning topographical anatomy through the form of didactic teaching and using the art of cadaveric dissection. This has been replaced by the use of prosection specimens and computer aided learning packages as teaching tools to emphasise core anatomical structures. Traditional textbooks of anatomy often reflected the need for anatomical detail at the expense of clinical relevance. This level of detail is often far greater than what is expected of modern medical undergraduates. As a consequence of these changes the authors of Core Anatomy Illustrated have written an anatomical text that is relevant to current undergraduates

The aims of the authors of Core Anatomy Illustrated is to present the basic knowledge of anatomy which is required for safe clinical practise. The authors hope to achieve this by taking the relevant basic anatomical knowledge, which they feel is “core” knowledge and using anatomical illustrations to highlight this. The layout of the book allows a quick facilitation of core anatomical knowledge. For each double page spread the anatomical illustration is on the right hand side, with an explanatory key note below. Core structures are shown with a coloured number and non core anatomical structures are shown in black. The anatomical diagrams used throughout the book are chiefly high quality prosections. On the left hand side of each double page spread is the text to explain the core knowledge expected for each of the core anatomical structures highlighted in the illustrations. Clinical information is highlighted in the text by a sans serif font.

The book is designed to be brief and concise. Its aim is to offer “core” anatomy at an easily digestible level, without overburdening the reader with extraneous knowledge. The definition of “core” anatomy is subjective but the authors are all leading teachers in anatomy at undergraduate and postgraduate level and they have only included in the text what they feel is needed for safe clinical practise. The target audience for this book is at an undergraduate level and it delivers much of the anatomical detail that is expected of a medical student. For the student requiring greater detail he will have to turn to other traditional textbooks to supplement the core knowledge gained from Core Anatomy Illustrated

One should view this book as a synopsis of core anatomy with excellent diagrams highlighting core anatomical structures. For the inquisitive undergraduate it will allow an excellent overview of topographical anatomy upon which to add more detailed information by reference to more exhaustive texts. For a postgraduate surgical trainee this book is an excellent revision tool, as the illustrations allow spot tests to be done at home. And by reference to the text, the surgical trainee will learn the salient points that they may be asked about in anatomical vivas. Overall Core Anatomy Illustrated is a useful compliment to the legion of anatomical textbooks that are available to be purchased.

Review by Mr Prabhu Sekaran

*Speciality Registrar Paediatric Surgery
Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow*

Email: prabhu_sekaran@hotmail.com