

sections, as there is greater difficulty in deciding what to include in a short clinical summary, as opposed to one on physiology. For example, the section on pleural diseases includes very little discussion of pleural fluid analysis but devotes a paragraph to mesothelioma. In addition, rapid changes in clinical medicine and practice differences between societies may rapidly make information outdated or inaccurate (eg, ciprofloxacin, rather than more active fluoroquinolone, is mentioned as second-line anti-tuberculosis therapy).

Given the small space allotted to each topic, clarity in statements is essential, but the clinical sections contain occasional unclear or confusing statements. For example, community-acquired pneumonia is defined as "lower respiratory tract infections occurring within 48 hours of hospital admission." It is not clear that this definition could apply to patients who are not hospitalized.

The *At a Glance* series is British in orientation, and the clinical section includes and excludes information that would/wouldn't typically be found in an American text. The text uses European units (eg, kPa rather than cm H<sub>2</sub>O), but information on unit conversion is included. Some of the information is clearly not directed at the North American student; for example, the chapter on tuberculosis states that, "Pulmonary tuberculosis is most common in Asian, Chinese, and West Indian people." Other points of difference in the tuberculosis section include a paragraph devoted to the Heaf test and drug therapy, which recommends a 3-drug initial regimen (as opposed to the 4-drug regimen recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control).

There was an obvious effort to make this book user-friendly. The index is thorough and there are few typographical errors. The diagrams are clear and well-labeled, and the radiographs clearly illustrate the pathology. No references were included, which would have been useful, given the concise nature of this book.

In summary, **The Respiratory System at a Glance** is a basic and concise review of respiratory physiology and disease processes. It would be most useful for students in medicine, nursing, and respiratory therapy as a supplement to more comprehensive texts and as a review for examinations. I recently taught a course on respiratory medicine for second-year (pre-clinical) medical students, and this book's chapters on respiratory physiology would have been a useful

supplement to highlight and concisely explain key concepts. The sections on clinical medicine might also be useful for health-professional students in their pre-clinical years. Students looking for a guide during their clinical years should seek out one of the many available "on the wards" pocket reference books.

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The author of this review reports no conflict of interest.

**The Washington Manual Pulmonary Medicine Subspecialty Consult.** Adrian Shifren MD, editor. *Washington Manual Subspecialty Consult* series, Tammy L Lin MD and Daniel M Goodenberger MD, series editors. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams Wilkins/Wolters Kluwer. 2006. Soft cover, illustrated, 284 pages, \$29.95.

**The Pulmonary Medicine Subspecialty Consult** is a pocket-sized manual that addresses a broad range of topics in both in-patient and ambulatory pulmonary medicine in a concise and well-organized fashion. It is one of 11 such subspecialty manuals in the *Washington Manual Subspecialty Consult* series. **The Pulmonary Medicine Subspecialty Consult** has 32 chapters, ranging from basic pulmonary concepts (chest radiograph and pulmonary function testing) to complicated disease processes (interstitial lung disease and pulmonary hypertension), with a targeted and thoughtful design. Each chapter contains at least one table of important concepts or differential diagnoses that should be considered when evaluating an individual patient.

There are also flow diagrams that provide logical diagnostic or therapeutic approaches to common pulmonary difficulties. These graphics nicely complement the text in both organization and content. Each chapter is well organized and designed to function as a quick review of the topic, highlighting key points in the patient's history and physical findings, appropriate laboratory and radiographic studies, differential diagnoses, and therapeutic strategies. Each chapter lists suggested readings, including key consensus statements, practice guidelines, important clinical trials, and review articles.

The primary target audience is medical students, residents, and fellows in in-patient and out-patient consultative services, so the book is a quick reference for key details and issues that should be considered in the typical evaluation of patients with common pulmonary disorders. The book fits in a lab coat pocket. The intent of this text is not to function as a complete reference of pulmonary medicine, and it will not replace traditional textbooks that have detailed descriptions of airway mechanics, pulmonary physiology, and pathology.

However, as a quick reference that can be reviewed in several minutes on an in-patient ward or clinic setting, it will be a useful tool in the evaluation of pulmonary patients, by listing the key issues that should be considered while evaluating the patient at the bedside and providing references for a detailed review later. Another population that will find this text helpful are those who practice in busy primary care and hospitalist settings, where the wide variety of patient issues encountered requires convenient, easily accessible information. It will also be a useful and reliable desktop companion.

Overall, this is a useful and well-written reference that addresses a wide variety of topics with a very logical and practical approach. It will quickly find a niche in the lab coats of medical students and residents on pulmonary services. Those looking for a brief review of basic pulmonary topics will also find a tremendous value that lives up to the expected quality and reputation of other products from the *Washington Manual* series.

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The author of this review reports no conflict of interest.

**Lung Function: Physiology, Measurement, and Application in Medicine**, 6th edition. JE Cotes DM DSc FRCP, DJ Chinn PhD MSc, and MR Miller MD FRCP. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing. 2006. Hard cover, illustrated, 636 pages, \$199.95.

What an honor it is indeed to have the opportunity to review this book, though I must admit that the idea of critically reviewing it gave me as much disquietude as one might expect from an invitation to publicly discuss inaccuracies in Garry Kasp-