

## Diagnostic imaging of infants and children by Robert G. Wells

McGraw-Hill Professional, 2012. Hardcover 2,400 pp, English, ISBN-10 007181003X, ISBN-13 978-0071810036, U.S. \$325

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We live in time of textbook riches. It may sound contrarian but a quick look at Amazon's listings of pediatric radiology texts reveals dozens of subspecialty books from independent authors and traditional publishers. Added to this bounty are an ever-growing number of e-texts. The rich options can be divided into a few broad categories. Ignoring the e-texts, physical texts can be separated into the traditional narrative text, hyper-structured disease- or condition-centered atlas or fact book, and a combination of both. The traditional narrative (Caffey's 11th edition) creates a story of disease, grouping like entities. In the best cases the text invites the reader to continue reading beyond any immediate work-related question. The hyper-structured atlases as typified by the Amirsys books provide expert-level detail with multiple exemplary illustrations. This type of text rarely provides context for the understanding of pathology or an underlying paradigm of disease. The combination text tries to walk the line. This final group is what traditional publishers are trying to push. Success or failure of the final group requires careful construction and execution.

*Type of book* The latest entry into the traditional group is *Diagnostic Imaging of Infants and Children* by Robert Wells. This expansive text is an impressive accomplishment that as best as I can tell is the work of one author. Dr. Wells has created an up-to-date text with excellent illustrations. Older readers will find a familiar voice describing contemporary concepts with authority.

*Contents* I was given only the first volume to review. Volume 1 includes the thorax, cardiovascular system, and brain and spine and weighs in at more than 10 lb. Each chapter is separated into the traditional sections of developmental

imaging, neonatal imaging, infections and neoplasms, and trauma. This is a tried and tested structure and Dr. Wells demonstrates a mastery of pediatric disease. Clinical and presenting symptoms are detailed, non-imaging diagnosis is explained and diagnostic considerations are discussed. Finally management is briefly explained.

*Strengths* In volume 1, there are thousands of illustrations. The illustrations are very high quality and as expected include well-rendered radiographs and CT and MR images. Volume 1 does not include much nuclear medicine and only slightly more sonography but this is a function of the chapters included. The text is clear and concise, explaining each disease in a familiar, fluent way. Useful call-out boxes provide differential diagnoses as well as terminology and disease paradigm breakdowns. The reference lists are comprehensive and up-to-date.

*Weaknesses* There are some gaps in the text, probably a function of the singular experience of the author. He does not include much nuclear medicine and there is a regional bent to the understanding of some diseases such as histoplasmosis. Although there are several thousand illustrations, many diseases are detailed in the text without an illustration. But these are insignificant critiques in what is truly an excellent text. The only real gap is discussion of radiographic technique, whether it is CT or MRI protocol or contrast agent selection. This is an understandable omission given the rapidly changing nature of our specialty but will send some readers elsewhere for this important tutorial.

*Recommendation* Dr. Wells has produced a readable and educational text. It is worthy of any resident or fellow and should prove useful to the puzzled senior pediatric radiologist who is searching for an answer. It would certainly be an excellent addition to a well-stocked radiology library.

*Overall grade* Excellent.

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