
BOOK REVIEW

The skinny on skin: An illustrated dermatology guide for the public and beginning practitioners

David J. Najarian, 2012, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. 234 pages. \$34.97. ISBN: 978-1-4611-3717-7.

I found this little book delightful. At only 234 pages, it is a helpful illustrated guide for our patients. It opens with an easy-to-read table to assist the uninitiated with the possible causes of their malady. Common diagnoses are listed alphabetically, and Dr Najarian provides clear yet concise explanations.

More importantly, it is a useful tool for the physician extenders in dermatology. Each condition is covered in approximately 1 to 2 pages. In addition, a succinct explanation of the disease and its process includes etiology, differential diagnosis, and treatment options. I have decided to incorporate this primer into our dermatologic training modules for our physician assistants.

The strength of the book lies in Dr Najarian's ability to make challenging topics in medical skin conditions, such as leukocytoclastic vasculitis, easily understandable. His section on medical treatments

and, in particular, the systemic drugs we use, such as isotretinoin, are well done. He addresses indications and contraindications, important side effects, and adverse reactions. Also included are drug dosages, monitoring guidelines, and patient management tips.

The cosmetic treatment section provides a brief review of the more common office procedures. My impression is that this is quite adequate for the targeted population of readers.

The final chapter addresses surgical and other treatments and tests. It reviews and explains biopsy procedures, simple excisions, and Mohs micrographic surgery. Patient information includes preoperative instructions and postoperative care. The mechanism of patch testing for allergic contact dermatitis is shown and discussed.

In conclusion, Dr Najarian focuses on clarifying the issues important to our patients in language that is easily understood. For the physician extenders, this is a quick and reliable reference that will augment their training and competency in dermatology.

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