



ABC of Rheumatology, 3rd edition

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Musculoskeletal problems are common in both general and hospital practice. One of the challenges is differentiating the patient with a potentially serious rheumatological condition from the patient with a more benign condition. Furthermore, most practitioners (other than rheumatologists) will have only a handful of patients with more serious rheumatological conditions in their practice. This book provides a concise, up-to-date overview of musculoskeletal presentations and rheumatological conditions formatted in an easy to read manner.

The first chapter provides an outline of rheumatology in the community highlighting the role of specialist nurses. Importantly, it provides excellent summary tables which outline the critical information required in the referral letter, symptoms of early inflammatory disease, and red flags for regional pain syndromes. The initial few chapters then detail regional pain presentations, while the bulk of the book deals with specific conditions.

The layout is clear with plenty of pictures and tables providing key information on disease features, differential diagnosis, investigation, and treatment. The important side effects and toxicity monitoring required for commonly used disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs is covered, with the proviso that there is considerable variation among individual rheumatologists.

The role of the newer biological agents, which are currently only available for paediatric patients in New Zealand, are discussed briefly and provide a good introduction to these agents. The chapter on laboratory investigations provides a brief but excellent summary of common abnormalities and auto-antibodies in patients with rheumatological disorders. This book also highlights the importance of the multidisciplinary team approach, including both primary and secondary care centered around the patient.

In summary, this book is an excellent resource for general practitioners involved in the investigation and management of patients with rheumatological conditions. In addition, it is an appropriate resource for both medical students and FRACP candidates.

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