

Preface

The first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed the continuation of an explosion in our knowledge and understanding of all aspects of disease. Accompanying this has been the increasing reliance of clinicians on more and more complex imaging modalities and laboratory tests. It is the assertion of this author, however, that the fundamental skills of history taking and clinical examination remain the most important tools in reaching diagnosis.

This book aims to nurture these age-old skills of listening, observation, and examination by demonstrating their invaluable application in modern medical practice. In writing this book, I have drawn on not only my own experience, but on a wealth of advice from both those I have taught and those who have taught me. The omission of an exhaustive inventory of differential diagnoses for every clinical finding has been an intentional one; I strictly adhere to listing the most common conditions that a clinician will encounter to maintain practical value and clarity. For the same reason, I have also endeavored to describe the most useful and frequently performed clinical tests only, rather than the multitude of possible tests that exist for all conditions.

It is my hope that the resulting book will be useful for all those involved in the care of orthopaedic patients; for medical students in emphasising the most salient features of common presentations, for general practitioners in providing clear and concise information on which to base daily practice and for residents as a ready reference for day-to-day use and also for professional examinations.

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