

# Preface

## Why This Book?

“As is your pathology, so is your medicine,”  
William Osler

The father of modern American medicine acknowledged that a practitioner’s medical practice is as good as their knowledge of pathology. It is with his spirit that this book was conceived and with his wisdom that its goals were identified.

As a dermatologist, a dermatopathologist, and a teacher of both disciplines, I have faced questions from residents and practitioners that have no straightforward answers in published textbooks of clinical dermatology and dermatopathology. This book was written to answer these questions and as a supplement to major textbooks on clinical and histological diagnosis of skin disorders.

The goal of this book is to help students of dermatology and practitioners cross the space between clinical dermatology and dermatopathology in order to improve their comprehension of skin disorders and further help manage their patients.

The book is divided into two parts.

The first part addresses histological diagnoses that do not have single and specific clinical counterparts, for example, psoriasiform dermatitis, lichenoid dermatitis, atypical melanocytic hyperplasia, pseudolymphoma, etc.

The second part addresses ways to use the clinical and histological findings to arrive at the best diagnosis in a patient presenting with:

- A certain lesion morphology, for example, eczematous, papulo-squamous, nodular, edematous, sclerotic, bullous, generalized pruritus, etc. and
- Lesions on specific sites of the body, such as scalp pustules, face papules, leg nodules, palmoplantar hyperkeratosis, patchy scalp alopecia, etc.

## **What This Book Does Not Claim to Accomplish**

This is not a book teaching the histopathology of skin disorders. There are many such books that accomplish their goals brilliantly. The material here is not likely to prepare a resident for the board examination, or a practitioner for recertification.

Instead, this book aims to help the clinical practitioner learn about the power of histopathology but also its many limitations. Understanding the power and limitations would hopefully lead to more effective and more efficient practice and use of resources. It would also hopefully help practitioners ask for specific pathology answers to their clinical questions, accept limited answers to others, and learn how to tell the difference between the two situations.

The clinical and histological knowledge and opinion that is contained in this book is the result of 35 years of study, a long consultative clinical practice, and interpretation of hundreds of thousands of biopsy specimens in a university practice setting.

Practical Skin Pathology

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