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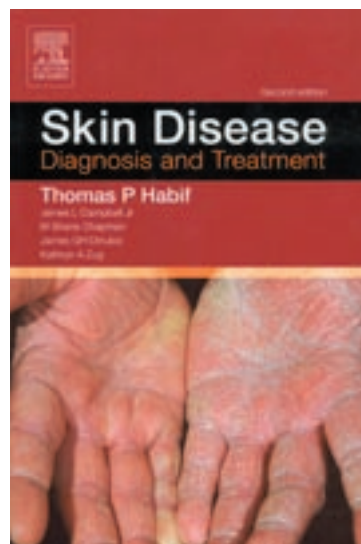
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This is the second edition of the book *Skin Disease: Diagnosis and Treatment*, edited by Thomas P. Habif, Adjunct Professor of Medicine (Dermatology) at Dartmouth Medical School, Hanover, NH, USA. The first edition appeared in 2001. In the preface, the editors stress that changes in health care delivery require an increasing level of sophistication among primary care providers in all medical disciplines. Dermatology is no exception, since 10% of all outpatient medical visits to primary care physicians are for dermatologic problems.

This book has been designed as a field guide for the diagnosis and treatment of common dermatologic conditions. The book is very concisely written. Each chapter contains the following subtitles: description, history, skin findings, laboratory and histology, discussion, differential diagnosis, course and prognosis, and management. The chapters are concluded with "pearls", briefly highlighting particular disease. Most chapters are closed with a special frame on pediatric considerations, listing specificities of a particular dermatosis in childhood or brief warnings on therapy in childhood. All chapters are illustrated with very good photographs, most of them ending in color coded figures that represent statistical maps showing the likely distribution of skin lesions.

The introductory chapter deals with local therapy in dermatology and contains basic principles of this therapy as well as of therapies to maintain skin barrier, skin cleansing, skin moisturizing, topical formulations and wet dressings. The same chapter brings concise instructions on the use of local corticosteroids and their most common side



effects. The authors are rather critical towards combinations of topical corticosteroids and antibiotics or antimycotics, and conclude that the use of these combined agents is unnecessary.

The chapter on eczema appears to be more extensive than those on other dermatoses. The group of eczema is divided into acute, subacute and chronic eczematous inflammation, with special reference to hand eczema as a common problem with multiple causative and contributing factors. In this chapter, hand eczema is categorized as follows: irritant; keratolysis exfoliativa; atopic; fingertip; allergic; hyperkeratotic; nummular; pompholyx (dyshidrosis); lichen chronicus and id reaction. All these clinical entities are described in detail. Asteatotic eczema is presented as a distinct clinical pattern of eczematous dermatitis that is caused by excessive dryness and chapping of the skin. Dishydrosis is described under the term pompholyx that has been in part abandoned in Europe. Autosomal dominant ichthyosis vulgaris is also discussed in this chapter, as it is associated with atopic diathesis in 50% of cases.

The chapter on urticaria concisely presents the state-of-the-art on this problem in practice. Besides acute and chronic urticaria, practical approach to angioedema and mastocytosis (urticaria pigmentosa), pruritic urticaria papules and plaques of pregnancy is described.

The chapter on psoriasis and other papulo-squamous diseases brings all relevant data on these diseases, along with information on current approach in the management of these diseases. In this chapter, description is found of seborrheic dermatitis, Grover's disease, and all clinical forms of parapsoriasis.

The chapter on bacterial infections of the skin is focused on impetigo as a common skin infection in children. As usually in the Anglo-Saxon literature, cellulitis is described as an infection of the dermis and subcutaneous tissues characterized by fever, erythema, edema and pain. Cellulitis is most often caused by a group A streptococcus and *Staphylococcus aureus*. According to this opinion, erysipelas is an acute inflammatory form of cellulitis that differs from other types of cellulitis in that lymphatic involvement is prominent.

Chapter 7 is dedicated to sexually transmitted infections, beginning with 2002 treatment guidelines, where treatment protocols for all sexually transmitted diseases are listed. This is followed by brief but comprehensive presentation of these diseases.

Then there are excellently written chapters on viral infections of the skin and mucosa, fungal infections of the skin, nails and scalp, and on drug reactions. The chapter on drug hypersensitivity reactions is supplemented with a very useful table of most common clinical manifestations of drug hypersensitivity with the list of causative drugs. The description of toxic shock syndrome points to the four major diagnostic criteria (all four must be met) and multi-system involvement (three or more must be present).

Chapter 11 is dedicated to hypersensitivity syndromes and vasculitis. Toxic epidermal necrolysis is very precisely described. In pediatric considerations, it is stated that therapy for this disease is identical in adults and children, the mortality rate being lower in pediatric patients. The chapters on infestations and bites, vesicular and bullous dis-

eases, connective tissue disease, light-related diseases and disorders of pigmentation provide the latest data on these diseases and current approach to their treatment.

Chapters 16 and 17 deal with benign and malignant non-melanoma tumors, providing basic data on T cell skin lymphoma, Paget's disease and extramammary Paget's disease. Cutaneous metastases of solid tumors are also described in this chapter.

Chapter 18 brings a simple and figurative presentation of dermatologic issues of nevus and malignant melanoma, whereas chapter 19 deals with vascular tumors and malformations. It is followed by chapters on scalp and nail diseases, neonatal disease and cutaneous manifestations of internal disease.

In contrast to other similar textbooks and handbooks, dermatologic propedeutics is found at the end of the book. Primary, secondary and specific lesions are listed first, followed by differential diagnoses according to body regions. A list of dermatologic drugs listed according to action is found at the very end.

The book *Skin Disease: Diagnosis and Treatment* has been written to fit the clinical needs of every dermatovenerologist. Specifically designed for quick reference, the book focuses on 250 diseases most likely to be seen in daily practice, and includes practical and clear advice for diagnosis and therapy.

The book is a very useful handbook for every dermatovenerologist, primary care practitioners, internists, emergency medicine practitioners and medical students who wish to engage in dermatology and venereology.

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