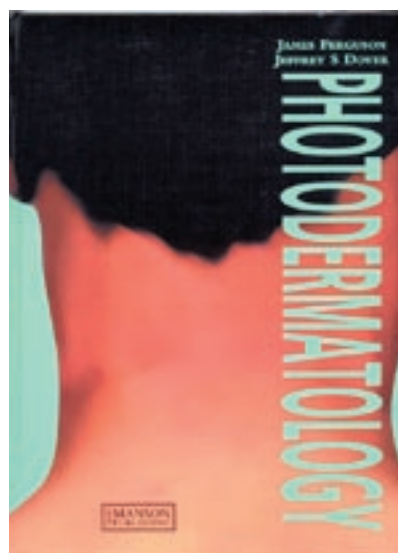


Ferguson J, Dover JS, editors. Photodermatology. London: Manson Publishing Ltd., 2006. Format: hard cover, one volume. Pages 160, chapters 24, ISBN 1-84076-054-5

It is a pleasure to have an opportunity to review the first edition of the book *Photodermatology*, edited by James Ferguson and Jeffrey S. Dover. *Photodermatology*, a field of science investigating biological effects of ultraviolet (UV) and visible light on the skin, has been intensively developed over the past two decades. This book, written by fifteen renowned experts in the field of photobiology, will significantly contribute to upgrading the respective knowledge in the scope of dermatology. In the introduction section, J. Ferguson, one of the editors, writes about the role of photodermatoses and photosensitivity in general. Within the diagnostic range, a number of distinct groups of photodermatoses exist. These include idiopathic photodermatosis which, although increasingly thought to have an immune basis, still in general needs to have evidence of an allergen and the type of immune reaction defined. Genophotodermatoses are genetically determined diseases; porphyrias represent a mental/combination origin. Drug and chemical induced photosensitivity reactions are increasingly common. Photoaggravation is commonly seen with a wide range of conditions when either patients report an exposed site problems or there is clear history of summer seasonal activity, although they do not in general show true photosensitivity. The second and third chapters deal with elementary photobiology and photophysics, along with modern instruments used on photodiagnostic procedures in photodermatology. The fourth chapter is dedicated to UV index and current methods of photoprotection. Separate chapters describe the most common photodermatoses: polymorphic light eruption, hydroa vacciniforme, chronic actinic dermatitis, solar urticaria, actinic prurigo, and ju-



venile springtime eruption. These chapters are illustrated with numerous high-quality photos of the respective dermatoses. The latest concepts on the incidence, age at onset, pathogenetic mechanisms, clinical picture, treatment, prevention and prognosis of these diseases are presented, with special reference to photodiagnosis. All photodiagnostic procedures needed to confirm the diagnosis of these photodermatoses are described in detail. It should be noted that juvenile springtime eruption, rarely diagnosed in Croatia, has a prevalence of 6.7 in male children in some parts of New Zealand. A separate chapter deals with photoaggravated dermatoses. Many skin diseases can be exacerbated by sunlight exposure. Photoaggravated dermatoses differ from true photodermatoses in that they can also occur without UV or visible light exposure. Photoaggravation of dermatitis is best described in atopic dermatitis. About 10% of people with atopic dermatitis are aware of exacerbations triggered by sunlight. Photoaggravation has also been noted in seborrheic dermatitis, allergic contact dermatitis, psoriasis, lupus erythematosus, erythema multiforme, lymphocytoma cutis, Darier disease, bullous pemphigoid, rosacea, and other dermatoses. Chapter twelve, written by J. Ferguson, is dedicated to drug-induced photosensitivity. The author concludes that drugs induce photosensitivity by a variety of mechanisms.

Phototoxicity is by far the most common of these. Other less common mechanisms include lupus erythematosus, lichen planus, pellagra, erythema multiforme and photoallergy. The text is accompanied by numerous tables listing drugs responsible for photosensitivity. A separate chapter is dedicated to photoallergy and photopatch testing. There has been considerable variation in the methodology of photopatch testing in the UK as well as elsewhere in Europe and the United States. Therefore, the British Photodermatology Group has reviewed the subject of photocontact allergy and photopatch testing, and published guidelines based on the existing literature and consensus practice in the UK at the time, in an attempt to standardize the photopatch test technique in the UK. The interpretation of photopatch testing may be difficult, particularly in photosensitive patients. Phytophotodermatitis is dealt with in a separate chapter, where the major plants known to cause phytophotodermatitis are listed in a table by their botanic and popular names. Chapter 15 deals with photohistopathology, emphasizing that the microscopic appearance of inflammatory dermatoses may occasionally be characteristic but is often nonspecific. A close clinicopathologic correlation is required to optimize the chance of diagnostic success. Chapter 16, richly illustrated with schematic presentations and photographs, describes porphyrin biochemistry, whereas cutaneous porphyrias are described in chapter 18. The chapter on genophotodermatoses has been written by J. Ferguson. This group of rare inherited skin disorders are characterized by photosensitivity and a range of other clinical signs. The diseases, with the exception of Smith-Lemli-Opitz syndrome, are all due to genetic defects in the process of DNA repair.

The last five chapters of this book of high relevance for both science and practice are dedicated to the use of light in the management of various skin diseases, beginning with therapeutic use of UV light (photochemotherapy and phototherapy), indications and contraindications, therapeutic protocols, side effects, patient and medical personnel protection measures, and other aspects of these methods of treatment. An account is given of photodynamic therapy, photosensitizers used in this mode of treatment, the known mechanisms of action, and therapeutic side effects. The last four chapters provide thorough presentation of laser therapy in dermatology. Laser to tissue interactions, laser therapy for vascular lesions, and laser therapy for pigmented lesions and tattoos are described in separate chapters. The section on the use of laser in dermatology is concluded with the chapter on ablative and nonablative laser skin resurfacing.

The study of biological effects of light on the skin has expanded rapidly over the last 20 years. In this book, the authors address all aspects of photodermatology by providing a clear introduction to these conditions, their investigation, diagnosis and management, including the use of lasers. Dermatologists, nurses and technicians all have important role to play in the diagnosis of photodermatoses and administration of phototherapy. This concise, richly illustrated book offers new concepts in the field of photodermatology.

Aida Pašić, MD, PhD