Book Review

Kumar V, Cotran RS, Robbins SL: *Robbins Basic Pathology*, 873 pp, Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 2003 (\$62.95).

It is my great privilege to review the seventh edition of a classic primer of medical education. This book, known to all as the "Baby Robbins," has consistently matured with each past edition, including the current printing. Earlier issues of this text were written for dental students and individuals in allied health fields, but with the recent evolution of medical curricula incorporating pathophysiology and clinician teaching, recent editions have been utilized by many medical schools as a primary reference for pathology and pathophysiology courses.

The new release offers many refinements over previous issues, which include more color photographs replacing black and whites and quantitatively more images of gross and microscopic pathologic processes. Tables, used by students who succinctly organize unwieldy facts and details, may be found throughout the book, with several new tables partially substituting written text found in the previous edition. Colorful diagrams, flow charts, and schematics continue to be used as devices students can employ to understand difficult concepts not visualized in gross and microscopic images or not understood in text form.

Many relatively new concepts have been included in revised chapters, such as gastrointestinal stromal tumors and relationship with CD117. The chapter on genetics and pediatric diseases has been extended and includes new topics with more expansive coverage of laboratory diagnosis of hereditary diseases. Revisions of the chapter on diseases of the skin include a teaching component, which this reviewer recommends that the authors use in all chapters of future editions. The author of this chapter provides a section at the beginning covering basic vocabulary words with definitions needed to understand basic concepts in the chapter. Early student understanding of basic terminology provides pupils a foundation to build on.

The authors have selectively introduced the integration of disease mechanisms and laboratory diagnosis of pathologic processes. The chapter on cardiovascular disease successfully covers the laboratory diagnosis of "suspected myocardial infarction." As an attractive addition to this text, the laboratory diagnosis of diseases selectively fills a void in prior basic pathology textbooks used for medical student teaching.

In summary, this is a current, succinct, and easily comprehensible text, which covers the essence of human pathology. Medical students and course directors

will certainly appreciate the new edition. The authors should be commended on the continued improvement of a respected teaching resource.

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Kumar V, Cotran RS, Robbins SL: *Electronic Image Collection for Basic Pathology, 7th Edition*, CD-ROM, W.B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 2003.

Electronic Image Collection is designed as a teaching and learning resource to accompany *Basic Pathology 7th Edition* by Kumar, Cotran, and Robbins. The authors are highly respected medical educators. This CD provides a complete set of textbook illustrations, photographs, and figure legends. The full-color images are displayed at the same size as they appear in the textbook. The files are saved at a resolution (96 pixels/inch) suitable for on-screen viewing. They also may be pasted into presentations or other works consistent with the licensing agreement. The software requires a Web browser to open and Adobe Acrobat Reader for viewing. The program is easy to use, with three basic routes of navigation. "View Chapters" provides a table of contents based on the textbook. A thumbnail image accompanies each figure legend, and links are provided to full-size JPG and PDF files. The PDF files have more authentic color and are best for on-screen viewing and printing. The JPG files are useful for pasting into presentation programs, such as PowerPoint. "Get All Legends" enables you to save a complete set of figure legends for reference (Excel or PDF files). "Find Image" enables you to search the entire set of figure legends for topics of interest, e.g., typing in "aneurysm" pulled up six images related to this topic. Navigation arrows are conveniently located on each page, enabling you to jump quickly between chapters. The program also includes a "Lightbox" feature, which enables you to tag selected images for viewing as a group at a later time. Medical educators will find this CD a treasure trove of visual information for teaching basic and systemic pathology. Medical students will find this CD a helpful resource for class study and USMLE review. I highly recommend this beautiful, electronic image collection for all those interested in pathology education.

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