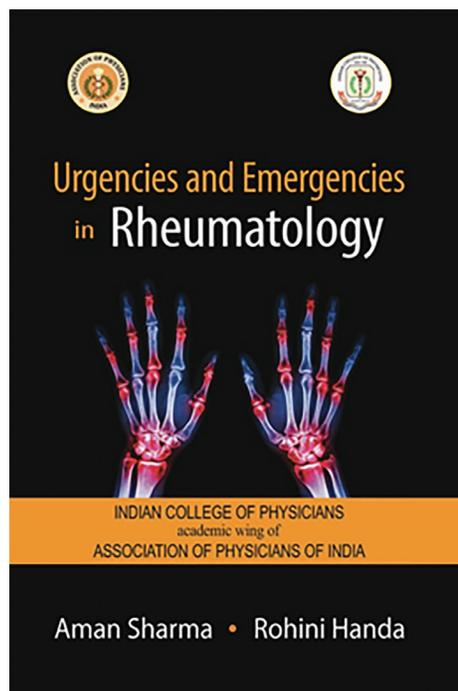


Book Review



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Urgencies and Emergencies in Rheumatology

This monograph on “Urgencies and Emergencies in Rheumatology” by Dr Aman Sharma and Dr Rohini Handa is undeniably a much-needed treatise on this diverse group of clinical entities commonly faced by medical practitioners. The manifestations of most rheumatological diseases are characteristically intricate and ramify into multiple specialties. Often, these conditions present as an emergent clinical situation, where sound management depends on a clear understanding of the nature and natural course of these conditions and a quick algorithmic approach to decision making. This is especially important because the management of rheumatological emergencies often employ treatment schemes that may be potentially harmful to the patient, like aggressive immunosuppressive therapies and often fairly expensive such as intravenous immunoglobulins. This monograph will facilitate the novice as well as experienced clinicians to develop a clear understanding of urgencies and emergencies in the field of rheumatology. The book can also serve as a ready-reckoner for the busy practitioner in the emergency room to assist him in decision making.

The monograph is divided into 13 chapters, each dealing with a particular rheumatological condition and authored by experts in the respective fields. The fundamental aspect in dealing with rheumatological emergencies is to differentiate between infectious complications, disease flare and complications arising out of pharmacotherapy. The authors have done a reasonable job in clarifying these issues. The individual urgencies and emergencies have meticulously been classified into different organ systems, wherever applicable, and bring forth a systematic reading experience. Chapters on systemic lupus erythematosus, systemic vasculitides, scleroderma, myositis, and sarcoidosis have successfully managed to address the myriad and intricate multi-system emergency presentations with a thorough review of the existing literature, in a laudable manner.

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Similarly, the chapters on rheumatoid arthritis and juvenile idiopathic arthritis have scrupulously covered the extra-articular crisis situations apart from an in-depth review of the articular emergencies. A separate chapter deals with the common predicament of acute low back pain, and the authors have presented a praiseworthy algorithmic approach to deal with this condition with special emphasis on the red flag signs. The chapter on acute gout is concise and provides a simple approach to this important condition. Some of the chapters like osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, acute low back pain, and rheumatoid arthritis will be of substantial interest to orthopedic surgeons as well, apart from physicians.

The chapters dealing with relatively rare diseases like antiphospholipid antibody syndrome (APLA) and Sjögren's syndrome have also managed to cover the topics thoroughly while underscoring the importance of identifying these rare syndromes in a busy clinical practice. The authors have presented a comprehensive table on mimickers of APLA and how to differentiate them from each other. All authors have paid heed to epidemiological issues so that the readers inculcate the facts in the correct perspective.

The book has its own share of inadequacies too. The biggest disappointment is the conspicuous deficiency of images and illustrations. Another notable flaw is the inhomogeneous formatting and structuring of different chapters that may restrict the flow of reading for a keen reader. Despite the minor blemishes, overall this monograph has filled a prominent gap in the array of existing works in the fields of rheumatology and emergency medicine. The book will hold a noteworthy pedestal in guiding both the beginners as well as experienced clinicians dealing with these disorders in their practice. The book will also find use in the hands of academicians who are looking for an account of such diverse clinical situations in a single volume.

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