Critical Care Radiology

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Publisher: Thieme
Price: €119.95
ISBN: 978-3-13-150051-9
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Critical Care Radiology edited by Professor Schaefer-Prokop, forms part of the Radiology series from Thieme. This edition is written by an interdisciplinary team of radiologists and clinicians involved in critical care medicine.

The book is divided into seven chapters covering basic radiological principles, the thorax (medical and surgical), the abdomen (medical and surgical), and the paediatric thorax and paediatric abdomen.

Within each chapter, there are sections on the various pathological conditions which may require ITU admission, or, in the case of the surgical chapters, those operations which are often followed up by ITU stay.

For example, in the thoracic chapter there are sections on pneumonia, pneumothorax, pleural effusion and pulmonary embolus, while the surgical chapter covers operations such as pneumonectomy, various transplantation procedures as well as oesophageal surgery.

Within each chapter the presentation, treatment and associated complications of the various diseases which would be expected to be encountered in intensive care are discussed. The role of, and most suitable imaging modality for, each stage of the disease process is described.

This particular part of the text is quite simple and demonstrates the fact that this book is also aimed at intensivists. Hopefully all radiologists are aware that ultrasound is a good modality for detecting intra-abdominal fluid!

The style of writing and presentation make it an easy book to read and it is quite informative. Generally, the quality of the images, illustrations and the accompanying text are good.
As one would expect, there is particular emphasis on the chest radiograph and CT imaging. However, there are a limited number of ultrasound images and a very small amount of MR images.

In certain areas of the book, the radiological descriptions are excellent and exhaustive, for example, when dealing with free abdominal air in a child the text and illustrations are very informative.

However, elsewhere such as the use of ultrasound in the post-transplant patient, the descriptions and images are insufficient to make this section of any clinical use.

At €120, this book is not cheap, and while it may be useful and helpful for registrars and reporting radiographers, the same depth of radiological information could be obtained from more standard reference texts.

I do not think that the level of knowledge or presentation of this book make it the most suitable ‘go-to book’ for typical day-to-day use at consultant level.