Physics, Pharmacology and Physiology for Anaesthetists

Key concepts for the FRCA
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Key concepts for the FRCA

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Foreword by

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To Anna and Harvey for putting up with it all
and for Dad

MC

For all my family
but especially for Adrian

EP
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*Tom E. Peck*

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the following individuals for their invaluable help in bringing this book to publication

Dr Tom Peck MBBS BSc FRCA
Anaesthetics Department, Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester, UK

Dr David Smith DM FRCA
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Dr Tom Pierce MRCP FRCA
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Dr Mark du Boulay BSc FRCA
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Dr Roger Sharpe BSc FRCA
Anaesthetics Department, Northwick Park Hospital, London, UK

In addition we are grateful for permission to reprint the illustrations on pages 183 and 184 from International Thomson Publishing Services Ltd.
Cheriton House, North Way, Andover, UK
The examinations in anaesthesia are much feared and respected. Although fair, they do require a grasp of many subjects which the candidate may not have been familiar with for some time. This is particularly true with regards to the basic science components.

This book does not aim to be an all-inclusive text, rather a companion to other books you will already have in your collection. It aims to allow you to have an additional reference point when revising some of these difficult topics. It will enable you to quickly and easily bring to hand the key illustrations, definitions or derivations that are fundamental to the understanding of a particular subject. In addition to succinct and accurate definitions of key phrases, important equations are derived step by step to aid understanding and there are more than 180 diagrams with explanations throughout the book.

You should certainly find a well-trusted textbook of anaesthesia if you wish to delve deeper into the subject matter, but we hope to be able to give you the knowledge and reasoning to tackle basic science MCQs and, more crucially, to buy you those first few lines of confident response when faced with a tricky basic science viva.

Good luck in the examinations, by the time you read this the end is already in sight!
Many things are currently in a state of flux within the world of medical education and training, and the way in which candidates approach examinations is no exception. Gone are the days when large weighty works are the first port of call from which to start the learning experience. Trainees know that there are more efficient ways to get their heads around the concepts that are required in order to make sense of the facts.

It is said that a picture says a thousand words and this extends to diagrams as well. However, diagrams can be a double-edged sword for trainees unless they are accompanied by the relevant level of detail. Failure to label the axis, or to get the scale so wrong that the curve becomes contradictory is at best confusing.

This book will give back the edge to the examination candidate if they digest its contents. It is crammed full of precise, clear and well-labelled diagrams. In addition, the explanations are well structured and leave the reader with a clear understanding of the main point of the diagram and any additional information where required. It is also crammed full of definitions and derivations that are very accessible.

It has been pitched at those studying for the primary FRCA examination and I have no doubt that they will find it a useful resource. Due to its size, it is never going to have the last word, but it is not trying to achieve that. I am sure that it will also be a useful resource for those preparing for the final FRCA and also for those preparing teaching material for these groups.

Doctors Cross and Plunkett are to be congratulated on preparing such a clear and useful book – I shall be recommending it to others.

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