

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-52736-1 — The Neurology Riddle Book
James Dolbow, Neel Fotedar , Joshua Edmondson
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The Neurology Riddle Book

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Neuroanatomy Riddles

James Dolbow, Joshua Edmondson, Neel Fotedar

ISBN 9781009527415

The Neurology Riddle Book

150 Common and Rare Neurological
Diseases in Riddle Form

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is in accord with accepted standards and practice at the time of publication. Although case histories are
drawn from actual cases, every effort has been made to disguise the identities of the individuals involved.
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This book is dedicated to our patients.

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Foreword

All my favorite seasonal traditions take place in October. We set up an eight-foot inflatable spider in the front yard, slice up a few pumpkins, and snuggle in front of our favorite horror films. And yes, I contend that candy corn is the ambrosia of the gods, and I will fight anyone who says otherwise.

My October reading list is also seasonal, but it falls into an entirely different genre. You see, autumn is when medical students apply for neurology residency positions, so after we finish watching “Cabin in the Woods” for the sixth time, I get to settle down in bed with a hefty stack of personal statements from aspiring neurologists.

Slasher flicks lean heavily on classic movie tropes . . . creepy clowns, cars that will not start, victims deciding to split up for no reason. Similarly, the neurology personal statement depends on charmingly predictable devices and common themes. If you want to write a personal statement that incorporates every trope, try this:

Paragraph 1: I value patients as people.

Paragraph 2: My colleagues say there are no treatments for neurologic diseases, but they are categorically wrong! We can treat anything! (This paragraph must include several exclamation points.)

Paragraph 3: I’ll never forget the deeply impactful moments when my parents read to me the collected works of Oliver Sacks while I was in utero.

Paragraph 4: I witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of neurologic illness on my beloved distant relative. (Note: If I am also applying to

urology, I have a modified version of this paragraph in which my distant relative is devastated by an enlarged prostate.)

Paragraph 5: My greatest desire is to incorporate research into my career. Or at least, I assume that's what you want to hear, so I'm saying it.

Paragraph 6: I LOVE PUZZLES.

This last paragraph is by far the most universal. Neurologists-to-be cannot get enough puzzles. For some it is jigsaw puzzles, Rubik's cubes, and escape rooms. Others fancy themselves the next Sherlock Holmes, Miss Marple, or Hercule Poirot. One applicant pointed out that Batman was known as The World's Greatest Detective before he was The Caped Crusader.

And while I'm callously teasing these poor medical students right now, they are not wrong. Most of us were drawn to neurology in part because we genuinely love a good brain teaser. Neurology is not the only diagnostic field, but our reliance on overlapping neuroanatomic pathways to localize lesions is unique in medicine. And even when cases are more about pattern recognition than localization, we rely on an amalgam of subtle clues from the history and examination to reach a verdict. A good detective story is full of details, and that, my friends, is why our notes are so maddeningly long.

And so all you Nancy Drews and Batmen have a hard-to-reach diagnostic itch to scratch. But fear not! With *The Neurology Riddle Book*, James Dolbow and Neel Fotedar have created a long-armed backscratcher that will hit the spot perfectly. The book you are holding is just dripping with intensely satisfying rhyming puzzles, guaranteed to probe your knowledge of neurologic illnesses from common to . . . (spoiler alert) Fatal Familial Insomnia.

One of the reasons I'm most excited about "*The Neurology Riddle Book*," is that it is full of delicious rhyming couplets. Neurology has a storied history of educational rhymes, dating back to 1859 when Swiss ophthalmologist Johann Horner threw his

penlight across the room with excitement upon discovering the mnemonic brilliance of “Ptosis, miosis, and anhidrosis.” This was followed by “C3, 4, 5 keep the diaphragm alive,” “First, worst, or cursed,” and the novel sodium-themed rhyme, “High to low, your brain will blow. Low to high, your pons will fry.”

With “*The Neurology Riddle Book*” and its predecessor, “*The Neuroanatomy Riddle Book*,” the number of canonical neurology rhymes has ballooned from 4 to 304. Arguably, this is a historically significant scientific achievement that has taken place in our lifetimes. It’s the kind of exciting progress in our field that will inspire future generations, and I look forward to reading more about it in the final paragraphs of neurology personal statements next October.

Zach London, M.D.

Preface

If you love neuroscience, especially neurology, chances are you love a good puzzle. This book aims to provide readers, from medical students to experienced neurologists, with fun and challenging riddles about clinical neurology. It includes 150 four-line riddles describing specific high-yield neurological syndromes, conditions, and diseases in cryptic form.

Answers can be any of the following:

1. A neurodegenerative disease
2. A movement disorder
3. A stroke type or neurological vascular event
4. A seizure disorder
5. A neuroimmunological condition
6. A neuroinfectious disease
7. A sleep disorder
8. A neuromuscular/myopathic disease

All riddles will include hints to help you identify the condition such as patient demographic, clinical presentation, or underlying pathophysiology, and if you are still stumped by the end of the riddle, at the bottom of the page you will find two additional hints to help guide you. On the following page, you will find the answer to the riddle along with a complete description of the condition,

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including the history of the disease, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, diagnostics, treatment, and prognosis.

Enjoy!