

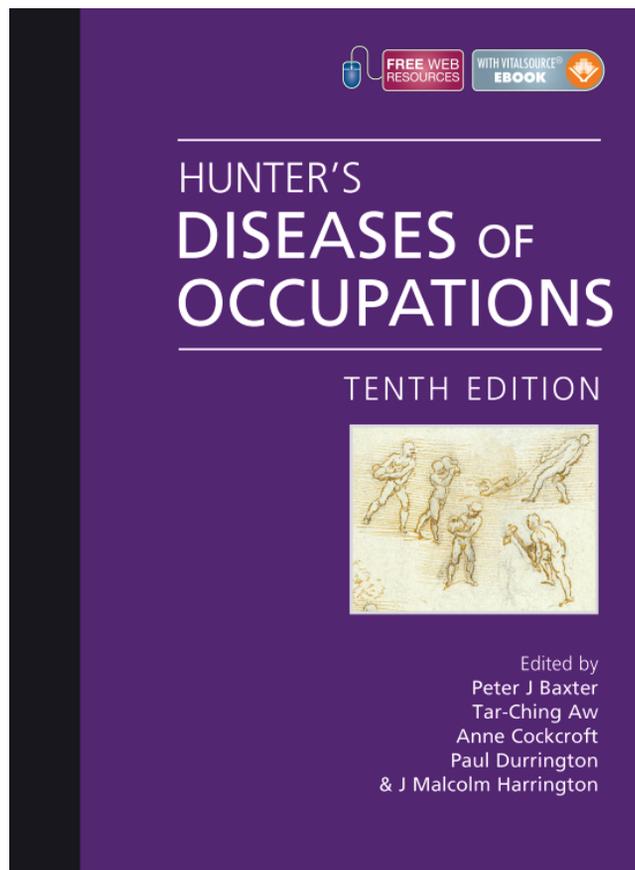
BOOK REVIEWS

Hunter's Diseases of Occupations. 10th Edition.

Edited by P. Baxter, T-C. Aw, A. Cockcroft, P. Durrington, J.M. Harrington.

Published by Hodder Arnold.

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Despite considerable improvements in the knowledge and prevention of occupational diseases in industrialised countries, the global burden of work-related disorders remains high, especially in developing countries and in countries with large populations undergoing rapid industrialisation. Consequently, occupational medicine deserves a high profile in the teaching of medical sciences. It will also have a societal role in the future, to help anticipate and identify new and unforeseen health consequences arising from innovative technologies and changes in work patterns.

In this context, there is a major need for a comprehensive reference textbook on occupational diseases.

Donald Hunter (1898–1978) was a pioneer of and a major contributor to occupational disease prevention as an investigator, writer, and teacher of a generation of British physicians. The 10th edition of *Hunter's Diseases of Occupations*, written by

a wide range of authors (more than 100 contributors from 15 different countries, the majority from the UK), covers all fields of occupational medicine. It is divided into eight parts.

Part one consists of general considerations on the history and development of occupational medicine, the diagnosis, extent and attribution of occupational diseases, and legal issues (such as medicolegal reports and role of the expert witness).

Part two deals with diseases associated with chemical agents, including a short chapter on reactive airways dysfunction syndrome and irritant-induced asthma. This part also includes a section on the toxicity of metals, with a brief description of respiratory disorders.

Parts three to six are devoted to diseases associated with physical agents, diseases related to ergonomic and mechanical factors, occupational infections and work-related mental disorders, respectively.

The seventh part concerns occupational respiratory diseases. It comprises 286 pages and covers the entire field of work-related chest diseases, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, extrinsic allergic alveolitis, byssinosis, berylliosis, metal-induced lung diseases, and asbestos- and silica-related diseases. New chapters on epidemiology of asbestos- and silica-related diseases, including cancers, have been added to the previous edition. The seventh part also includes a chapter on the health effects of ultrafine particles or nanoparticles, and a chapter on health effects of non-industrial workplace indoor environments.

The eighth part, "Other effects of workplace exposure", deals with occupational skin diseases, nephrotoxic, neurotoxic, hepatotoxic and haematopoietic effects of workplace exposure, reproductive health, and health disorders due to shift work or extended working hours. It also includes a chapter on occupational cancers with specific sections on lung cancer and mesothelioma.

At the end of each chapter, a key points section highlights the main messages, which is helpful for the busy reader.

Due to the large number of contributors, the quality of the text is somewhat heterogeneous and there are some unavoidable redundancies. Some subjects, such as work-exacerbated asthma, should have been discussed in more detail.

However, overall, this edition of *Hunter's Diseases of Occupation* is an excellent reference book addressing all aspects of occupational diseases, and the editors have achieved their aim to be "an accessible, up-to-date and comprehensive text on occupational and related conditions written for a large range of clinical practitioners, for consultants writing legal reports, for lawyers, and for others seeking medical guidance on the risks to health of work activities and industrial processes."

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