

Preface to the Second Edition

Anatomy is the basis of medical profession as human body is the focus of examination, investigation and intervention for diagnosis and treatment of diseases. There is a re-awakening of the importance of anatomy with the realization that sound knowledge of anatomy is the backbone of safe medical practice. A doctor with sound anatomical knowledge is well-equipped to perform safe procedure or surgery, than the one who makes mistakes by cutting normal anatomical relations of the structure or organ, operated upon (for which the doctor is sued in the court of law for negligence). One must appreciate that application of anatomical knowledge is the ongoing process throughout the medical career. Therefore, clinical anatomy occupies the center stage right from the outset of medical training. There are intentional efforts by health educationists over the world to bridge the gray zone between preclinical anatomy and clinical anatomy. Learning anatomy (which includes gross anatomy, microscopic anatomy, embryology and genetics) in a short span of time is a Herculean task. Therefore, though it is not conceptually difficult, its sheer bulk makes anatomy overwhelming. In this context, a shift towards teaching/learning basic anatomy alongside clinical anatomy is a progressive step. The key to successful and enjoyable learning lies in consciously integrating the basic and the clinical anatomy right from the entry point by initiating the trainees to identify normal anatomical structures in plain radiographs, CT scans, ultrasound scans, MRI, etc. Added to this, they may be exposed to patients presenting with typical deformities due to nerve injury, patients with hemiplegia, paraplegia, etc., patients with obvious congenital defects, patients with thyroid swelling, parotid swelling, etc. This is bound to arouse their interest in learning. Another very interesting approach is to train the trainee in clinical problem solving by using anatomical knowledge. This approach not only convinces the trainees that preclinical anatomy is an integral part of bedside medicine but also expands their thinking capacity (brain power). This approach is indispensable for concept clarity and retention (rather than rote learning).

Giving due regard to the constructive suggestions and comments from readers (both students and teachers) and bowing down to the request of M/s Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd, New Delhi, India the work on second edition of *Clinical Anatomy (A Problem Solving Approach)* was undertaken. The basic theme of the first edition *developing skills in anatomical thinking for solving clinical problems* has been retained. New chapters have been added on general anatomy (for giving conceptual background about basic tissues), general embryology and genetics besides osteology. All chapters on regional anatomy have been extensively revised and enriched with plenty of new figures including photographs of clinical material (collected from various clinicians) and radiological images (collected from radiologists) to emphasize relevance of anatomy in the practice of medicine. The solved examples on clinicoanatomical problems and multiple choice questions (MCQs) (given at the end of each section) not only aid in revising but also lend credence to the theme of the book. Clinical insight, embryologic insight and know more are displayed in boxes.

I am sure that this edition too will spread positive vibes towards this tough subject and will reiterate the fact that the subject is interesting only, if looked through the mirror of its clinical relevance. Moreover, this text can be a good resource material in problem-based learning (PBL) curriculum in graduate medical education.

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It is a well-known fact that is documented right from the Greek era that anatomy provides a firm foundation to the edifice of medical education. However, in the new paradigm, the clinical anatomy provides the keystone to this foundation. It must be appreciated that no part of the human body can be learnt in isolation and that relations of the same structure change from region-to-region. These anatomical relations may be the basis of the symptoms of a particular disease or of the signs of the disease or of a clinical test (used for diagnosis of a disease) or of a surgical procedure (used to diagnose and/or treat the disease). Traditionally, we are conditioned to equate anatomy to the science of muscles and bones, which gives the beginner an incorrect impression about the potential of the subject. The key to successful and enjoyable learning lies in consciously correlating the basic and clinical anatomy (like for example, understanding anatomical basis of the symptoms and signs of diseases, surgical procedures, contraceptive measures, understanding embryological basis of congenital anomalies, identifying normal structures in radiographs and comparing them with changes in the disease state, etc.). Medical Council of India (MCI) in its stipulations of 1997 has reduced the duration of the first MBBS course and has recommended problem-based learning in preclinical subjects. This situation demands a fresh approach in which the students are trained to solve clinical problems using the anatomical knowledge gained during the first professional course. To choose essentials of anatomy for first MBBS students from a vast body of anatomical facts posed a challenging task. Reading through the paraclinical and clinical texts besides special interactive sessions with clinical teachers gave an insight (to a certain extent) into how much of anatomy learnt at preclinical level is actually applied to gain sound clinical training. Accordingly, in a few instances, clinically-oriented concepts or interpretations are mentioned along with the conventional. The clinical testing of skeletal muscles is included to make the learning of muscles more meaningful. Thus, the problem-solving approach creates an imprint on the minds of the students that preclinical anatomy is an integral part of bedside medicine. The presentation of the subject matter throughout the text is logical and reader-friendly. Essentials of anatomy covering all regions of the body are encapsulated in a single volume in order to gain a holistic perception of the anatomical structures. The central theme of this text is, developing skills in anatomical thinking for solving clinical problems. It was indeed a Herculean task to give concrete shape to such a complex theme. Let us hope that students will enjoy learning anatomy when they are able to solve clinical problems given at the end of the sections.

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