Mayo Clinic Internal Medicine Board Review, 9th Edition 2010

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The Mayo Clinic has once again revised its time-honored, *"Mayo Clinic Internal Medicine Board Review"*. Since its first publication in 1994, it has been used as a course syllabus for the popular Mayo Clinic Board review course. It is also a book that is frequently used by Internal Medicine third year residents as an overall review for preparation for the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) examination. However, other medical students, family medicine residents, or any physician who wants to have a broad knowledge of Internal Medicine would benefit from it. The practicing internists or doctors with subspecialties in Internal Medicine will find this book particularly useful; it helps keep one up to date with general internal medicine concepts.

This ninth edition was published in 2010. As all internists would expect, it contains updates in Clinical medicine pertinent to the ABIM Certification examination. There are 26 chapters starting from the introduction to Board examination. Then a chapter for each specific organ systems and certain subjects emphasized by the ABIM, such as Critical Care medicine, Men's health or Geriatrics receive a chapter of their own. This edition also includes up to date pharmacy reviews that detail current information about medications in each subspecialty.

The special characteristic of this book is that it provides extensive knowledge about Internal Medicine, in a format that particularly facilitates the reader's retention of information. The chapters have been revised to include new treatment guidelines, evidence based recommendations and recent advances in medicine. What I find very helpful is the bullet points, which remind the readers of the important issues for each topic. Practicing internists who are short on time may use it the opposite way; reading the bullet points as a quick reference and returning to absorb the details in more leisure later. Those who prefer to learn by challenging themselves first before acquiring the information may do so since there are self assessment questions at the end of each chapter. Overall, there are more than 450 questions and their answers; this allows the exam takers to evaluate themselves before reading the syllabus or practice before taking the real exam.

However, this book is unbelievably heavy, weighing 8.3 kg. To my knowledge, there is no e-book format yet. The weight of this book is a major obstacle to its usefulness. You need an extra bag and strong muscles to carry it to and from the hospital, if you want to read it often, especially when the exams are getting close. Some readers may want to rip it apart into chapters which will allow them to go light weight and read as much as they want, without incurring wrist strain. However, this is not something book lovers would want to do. Many people have also complained that the font size in this edition is too small, suggesting that the book is indeed more valuable to younger internists with better eyesight, than as a reference for mature physicians.

Despite the ways in which the book's weight make it hazardous to health, I would nevertheless rate this book an overall 9.3/10. That is, 10/10 for the knowledge all authors put in the book, 10/10 for the format that the editor made and 8/10 for the printing quality from publisher. I do believe that it is a must-read book for ABIM exam takers and should be read and assimilated cover to cover, if one wants to get a good score.