

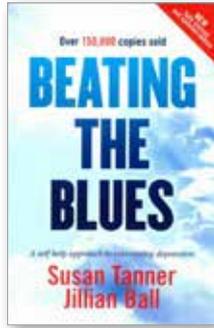
Beating The Blues: A self-help approach to overcoming depression

Susan Tanner

Jillian Ball

Australia: Tanner & Ball,
2012

ISBN 978 0646 581 620, \$29.95



This book, written by two psychologists, Susan Tanner and Jillian Ball, was first published in Australia and New Zealand in 1989. This book has been reprinted 20 times since the first edition. I found this book interesting, easy to read and well written overall. The authors state that the current edition from 2012 has been fully revised and updated. Without knowledge of the previous edition it is not possible to say how extensive this revision has been.

This book is written as a self-help guide for people who experience depression. It consists of

12 chapters and 241 pages in total. The authors explain the basics of depression, how thinking habits can lead to it, and the basics of cognitive behavioural treatment. Throughout the chapters examples are given of people living with depression, as well as statements from these people. These examples keep the reader engaged throughout the book. There also are several self-assessment tools for readers, which I found very useful. This book provides analysis and advice for people who suffer from depression, as well as advice for friends and relatives.

Chapter 12, the last chapter of the book, deals with the issue of living with someone who is depressed. I found the advice given for family members and friends in relation to suicidal ideation and suicide attempts too brief. I also

think that the importance of involving health professionals at an early stage, when suicidal thoughts occur, is understated in the book, as this is a critical issue for people with depression as well as for their families.

Having said that, this is a book well worth reading. The explanations and advice given empower people with depression and their families. It helps them to tackle and understand the issues that are part of the condition and provides a good description of negative thought processes and how to stop them. This is a book that any health professional working in primary health should read.

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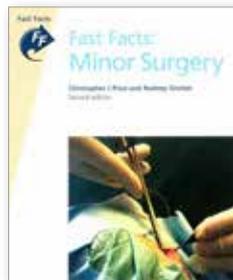
Fast Facts: Minor Surgery

Christopher J Price

Rodney Sinclair

Oxford: Health Press Limited,
2008

ISBN 978 1903 734 018, \$25.00



This is a useful book. The title may be a little misleading in that the section dedicated to actual surgical procedures is only about one-third of the book. However, the other sections dealing with surgery set-up, protocols, anaesthesia, avoiding complications, diagnosis and planning, are all vital for performing surgery well. In fact, revision of these aspects would be useful even for doctors who have been performing surgery for some time. This book is not aimed at more advanced skin surgery and other texts would be more appropriate for this.

A sentence on page 51 about diagnosis is worth highlighting: 'The ability to recognise lesions with confidence and knowing what to do having made the diagnosis, are the most important and difficult aspects of skin surgery.'

The sections on healing and avoiding complications could be shortened without detracting from the content.

Punch biopsy on page 86 suggests it may not be appropriate to biopsy pigmented lesions. I would strongly suggest saying that this must be avoided because of potentially serious problems with diagnosis. On page 99, dealing with epidermoid cysts, it would be useful to have a diagram showing excision lines from above the lesion. In the section on abscesses on page 100

it would be worth mentioning the use of a punch biopsy to drain abscesses. On page 111, SCCs of the lip and ear are mentioned as being particularly at risk of metastatic disease. I would add SCC of the scalp to this.

I would thoroughly recommend this book to GP registrars. More senior GPs should take the chance to borrow the book from their registrars. Even though it is a very basic text, it is important for all of us to get the basics right. We should never stop learning and re-learning in medicine.

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