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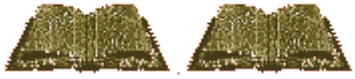 (N.B. Please increase your screen resolution to 1600 x 1200 dpi or more, for best viewing)

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EXCELLENT MEDICAL INFORMATION ON CD

Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine, 15th Edition, CD-ROM, Version 1.0 *edited by* Eugene Braunwald, Anthony S. Fauci, Dennis L. Kasper, Stephen L. Hauser, Dan L. Longo, J. Larry Jameson, Publication date: August 17, 2001, 1 CD-ROM in number with a PVC case, (Case Dimensions in inches: 1.33 x 9.98 x 7.76)
McGraw-Hill, Medical Publishing Division, Two Penn Plaza, New York, NY 10121-2298, , . Publication Date - August 17, 2001. ISBN 0-07-137479-5. Price $ 195.00

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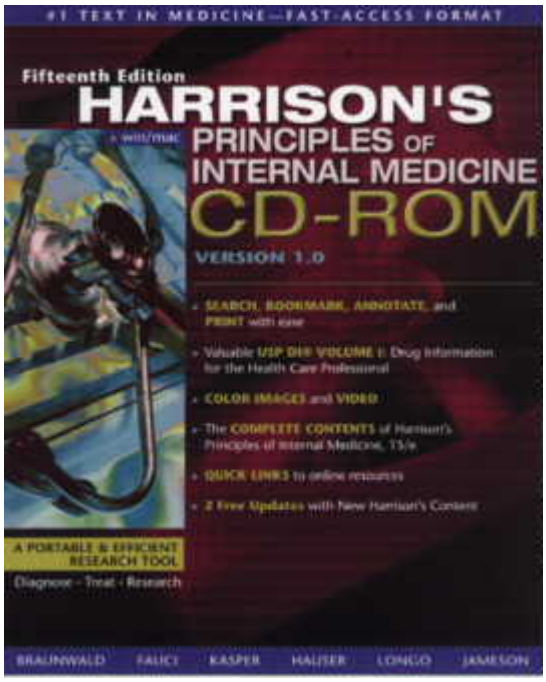


Harrison' *Principles of Internal Medicine* often known simply as Harrison has been a Gold standard in Medicine since decades. Its first edition came in 1950, and since then a new edition has been coming regularly at an average rate of a new edition every four years. I still possess its twelfth edition (1991), which I sometimes refer to, but obviously it is too much out of date. Buying a new edition meant finding space on my book shelf, and it was already quite choked.

View this book on Amazon

Thankfully, the publishers of Harrison - McGraw Hill - have now come up with *Harrison* on CD, which not only solves my problem of space, but solves many other problems as well. For instance if I want to have a look for information on, say, HIV, I just have to enter this word in the search box and lo, the information comes at once at my finger tips. If you have the book, you have to search for this information in the index as usual, and this can be quite frustrating. And of course it is time consuming.

This CD is NOT an abridged version of *Harrison*. It offers full access to the text, tables, and illustrations of the fifteenth edition of *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*. In fact it is like having a full two volume Harrison set in your pocket! There are other benefits. When you register your disc, you qualify to receive two FREE update discs which for the first time will include new material supplied by the Harrison's editors.

To access the CD you have to install a viewer called the teton viewer. It is included in CD itself. Once you have installed the viewer, you are ready to go. When you access the CD, you are greeted with an opening screen, which shows the search window. You can either search for any text (or string of text), or simply click on the line "*Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*". This will bring up all the fifteen parts, front matter, color atlases and appendices. Clicking on any of them will allow us to go deeper. For instance if I click on Part six entitled "Oncology and Hematology", three sections within this part open up. If I click on, say, Section 2 entitled "Disorders of Hematopoiesis", all chapters within this section (Chapters 104-115) come up. Clicking any of these chapters will of course bring up the chapter in full. It is much like opening folders and subfolders, to get at a particular document.

You can access all color atlases in this CD. I accessed this photograph of Frostbite via color atlas of dermatology. There are other color atlases too, such as color atlas of cardiology.



The text is full of hyperlinks and links to diagrams, pictures and charts. And this allows the user to move back and forth very easily. For instance I was reading chapter 105 entitled "IRON DEFICIENCY AND OTHER HYPOPROLIFERATIVE ANEMIAS" by John W. Adamson. At one place it says:

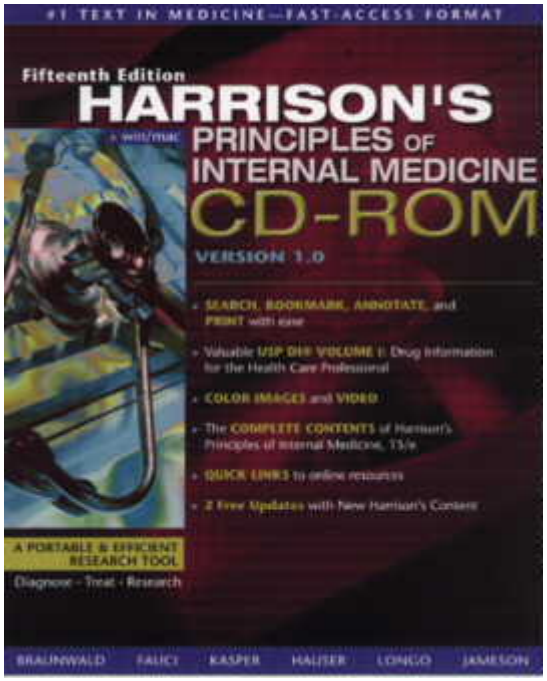
Anemias associated with normocytic and normochromic red cells and an inappropriately low reticulocyte response (reticulocyte index <2.5) are hypoproliferative anemias. This category includes early iron deficiency (before hypochromic microcytic red cells develop), acute and chronic inflammation (including many malignancies), renal disease, hypometabolic states such as protein malnutrition and endocrine deficiencies, and anemias from marrow damage. Marrow damage states are discussed in Chap. 109.

Now if I were reading this information in the book, and I was curious to get information on Marrow damage states, what would I do? I would first put a bookmark on the current page (to be able to come back to this page), then turn the pages forwards at random till I reach chapter 109, read the information I want, and then open the book back at the bookmark. This can be quite a hassle. Not so with the CD. This information is hyperlinked to chapter 109. So all I have to do is to just click on the letter 109, and I am immediately taken to chapter 109. For coming back to chapter 105, all I have to do is to click the "Go Back" Button, which is a small button at the top, with a blue arrow curving in an anticlockwise direction. Quite neat!

Skeptics would say there are inherent drawbacks in the CD version of any book. How for instance can you write your own notes? In the book we can easily do that. Well, the answer is that you can write your own notes in the CD version too. Just click on the bright yellow "open/create note" button, or press Ctrl+K, and a beautiful yellow note sheet opens up. You can write your own notes there. There is no limit to length of words. You may want to write just one line, or may be a full page. These notes can be accessed any time by the same method - either click on the "open/create note" button, or press Ctrl+K. The CD version allows you to go even further. By pressing Ctrl+Y, you

can see the list of all notes you have prepared. This is something, you can probably not do in the book. In this respect, the CD version scores a point. If you want to close the notes window, and go back to your reading, just press Ctrl+W. In fact this combination of keys can be used to close any window. Many times - especially when you have browsing the CD for long - you will find a number of open windows. If you want to get back to your original reading material, the only thing you have to do is to just go on pressing Ctrl+W, till you reach back your reading material.

QUICK NOTES



Some major highlights of *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine, 15th Edition, CD-ROM, Version 1.0* at a glance:

& Diagnose, treat, or research more efficiently
& More search options; greater search refineability
& Links to and searches to Harrison's Online 2.0
& Hypertext links to clinical trial summaries, clinical guidelines, and other websites
& Current topics, cardinal signs of disease, top contributors, new developments in treatment protocols, disease management, and therapeutics
& 200 color images
& Videos, including neurologic conditions
& 1500 pills and capsules fully searchable
& 2 Free updates with New Harrison's Content

You can even add bookmarks anywhere (just as you can do in a book). Just press Ctrl+J. The bookmark window will pop up. Give the bookmark any name, and click OK. To see the list of all bookmarks you have made, just press Ctrl+U, and all bookmarks will pop up. Clicking on any bookmark will take you to the appropriate place.

Four more control keys are worth mentioning here. You can access the contents of the book any time by pressing Ctrl+B (B probably for Book). By pressing Ctrl+S (search), you can go back to the

search window anytime, by pressing Ctrl+L, you can access the word list and finally by pressing Ctrl+T, you can access the thesaurus.

Some other notable features in the CD are smartmatch (where you can set the precision of your search), search with suffixes, search with thesaurus, collapsing and expanding documents, Retrieving Matching Documents from Match Summary, and using filters.

One can look at all the photographs in the book through this CD too. Photographs can be searched by topic, annotated and even copied on a floppy. You can even take a print out and perhaps use them in your classroom presentations. All this is not possible with the book. So certainly the CD versions holds advantages over the book version. I, for one, am a very ardent fan of this CD version of Harrison.

The CD comes in a beautiful, sturdy plastic case. An attractive feature is that when you buy the CD, you get free access to Harrisons online (http://www.harrisonsonline.com).

All in all a very valuable CD for all medical professionals and medical students. Fully recommended to all of them.

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