

I feel the book would be very helpful for beginners, such as medical students or interns, to begin to appreciate the complexity of critically ill patients. Respiratory therapists will find the discussions on oxygen transport and delivery helpful. Mechanical ventilation is covered only modestly. For nurses and other practitioners this book provides a wealth of information about critical care in easily readable format. For physicians and nurses trained in intensive care, the book would be an easily accessible review material. I said review. You should have a view of the subject to review it. **The ICU Book** would be a good addition to your "portable brain" but is not a replacement of your standard textbook on the subject.

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Basic ECG Interpretation, URL: www.saminc.com/ecg.course.htm. Internet-offered 25-hour credit course, offered by Fanshawe College, London, Ontario, Canada, and written and published by Internet-Based Learning, London, Ontario, Canada; 1998. Registration Fee \$103.00 Canadian, \$65.00 U.S.

This Internet course is composed of 10 units of instruction: (1) anatomy and physiology, (2) electrophysiology, (3) electrocardiogram (ECG) recording paper and leads, (4) sinus rhythms, (5) atrial rhythms, (6) junctional rhythms, (7) ventricular rhythms, (8) atrioventricular blocks, (9) pacemaker rhythms, (10) clinical rounds. There is a formative section examination at the end of each unit, as well as a final comprehensive summary exam that can only be accessed after successful completion of the sectional examinations.

The first 2 units thoroughly review the anatomy, physiology, and electrophysiology necessary to fully understand the applications that comprise the next 8 units. These introductory units cover such topics as struc-

tures of the mediastinum, cardiac chamber anatomy, neurotransmitters, muscle characteristics, the cardiac conduction system, action potentials, the sodium pump, and basic causes of arrhythmias.

Unit 3 concentrates on the practical side of ECGs. It details paper calibration and limb placement, and provides visual representations of the cardiac cycle. Unit 4 covers the sinus rhythms, including bradycardia, tachycardia, blocks, and arrests. The atrial rhythms (premature atrial complexes, supraventricular tachycardia, atrial flutter and atrial fibrillation) are discussed in Unit 5. Unit 6 reviews a wide range of junctional rhythms. Unit 7 describes ventricular rhythms. Of particular note are premature ventricular complexes, escape beats, ventricular tachycardia, ventricular fibrillation, and asystole. This section also identifies various medications used in the treatment of dysrhythmias.

Units 8 and 9 present a comprehensive analysis of the major atrioventricular blocks and pacemaker rhythms. The final instructional section, Unit 10, provides a clinical review of ECG analysis, plus several case studies that highlight the major cardiac arrhythmias covered in the previous sections.

This instructional tutorial is ideal for any health professional or student interested in learning the fundamentals of electrocardiography. Internet access with either Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator browser software is required for log-on registration. A full screen monitor with 800 × 600 pixels resolution and a minimum of 256 colors imagery is recommended. Course registration includes 20 log-on sessions. Individuals intending to master ECGs through Internet-access education need to be goal oriented and self paced. It takes concentration and motivation to complete the logically sequenced package. Since Internet connections sometimes disconnect, participants may also need to be patient with disruptions in information transmission.

Study via the Internet can be a very rewarding experience for the self-directed person. The authors of this tutorial provide a

wealth of information in a very charismatic fashion. The use of well-crafted graphics and vibrant colors add to the overall visual experience. The audience is treated to the latest in technology—including Java scripting and hypertext—that adds to the overall completeness of the study package. I found the glossary of terminology very useful. The course is peppered with humor that helps maintain the reader's interest and serves as a focal point for discussing the content. However, I did find the banter of students in the "cyber" classroom too flip at times.

Overall, I found this educational experience rewarding, and thought that the content was accurate, well organized, and on-topic. The appropriate repetition of important points, combined with exceptional graphics and animation, made the process exceptionally educational and reinforcing. The exams are well spaced and cover the material precisely, and the unit exams are a perfect review for the final exam.

I would recommend that the author consider adding digital still pictures or video of real patient applications that would help stimulate the thought process further. Scrolling through text and ECG strips alone can become tedious, despite the rich color palate. Actual lead placements or oscilloscope tracings would bring a stronger sense of realism to the already perfect ECG rhythm strips, and would be a natural extension of the content. Participating in this course reinforced my awareness of the increasing importance of technology in today's educational process, and highlighted the fact that Internet instruction can and should be more than reading text on a computer monitor. This course is a step in the right direction for medical education, and I look forward to other offerings from these authors. Kudos for their insight and ingenuity.

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