



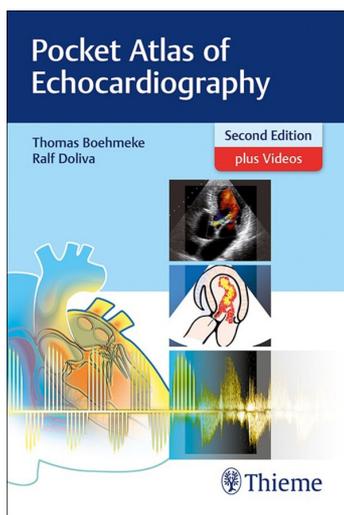
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Pocket atlas of echocardiography for beginners

BOOK REVIEW

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Pocket atlas of echocardiography

225 pages, tables, illustrations. Stuttgart: Thieme, 2017. Price EUR 50

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The *Pocket Atlas of Echocardiography* is a pocket atlas, containing more than 400 photos and 80 videos that introduce the reader to echocardiography. Its target group is most likely people with little experience of echocardiography. The book provides a useful insight into how images are obtained, the modalities that may be used, and the most common diseases for which echocardiography is used.

The book is based on illustrations and contains little text. The various imaging planes are explained in a straightforward manner. The authors explain how to proceed in order to find the different imaging planes, how each imaging plane transects the heart, and the appearance of the echocardiograms.

Many different modalities are used in echocardiography to collect as much information as possible: Regular 2-D images, M-mode, Doppler and colour Doppler. Instead of reviewing all the modalities for each imaging plane, the authors review each modality in turn, plane by plane. This seems unsystematic; it would have been easier to follow if instead all the modalities used in one imaging plane were addressed before proceeding to the next.

The authors then review the findings that may be anticipated for various diseases. Naturally, considerable space is devoted to valvular heart diseases. In addition the most common cardiomyopathies, ischaemic and hypertensive heart diseases, endocarditis, congenital heart failure, pericardial diseases and cardiac tumours are described. It appears here that the purpose of the book is to give readers an impression of how echocardiography can be used as a diagnostic tool, rather than being a detailed textbook.

The findings that the authors choose to describe seem a little random, and I feel that a clearer conclusion on how the findings should be interpreted would be an improvement. For example, in the chapters on valvular heart diseases it would be natural to provide an explanation of how these are graded. The manner in which the diseases are described means that this is not a book that can be used alone, but as a supplement to other textbooks.

A pocket atlas cannot be expected to cover all aspects of echocardiography, but there are some key elements that this book skips over. Neither diastolic nor systolic function are defined. These are concepts that it is essential to grasp if echocardiography is to be used as a diagnostic tool.

On the whole, therefore, I would say that the book may certainly be useful as an introduction to echocardiography, but owing to a number of weaknesses, it would not be my first choice.

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