

Nunn's Applied Physiology, 6th Edition

Edited by Andrew B Lumb
Elsevier Limited, 2005.

The 6th Edition of Nunn's Applied Physiology served as my introduction to this well known text. What a pleasant introduction it proved to be. This book is eminently readable both as a sustained read and for dipping into. Indexing is good and the chapter arrangement and size divides a very broad subject into manageable chunks.

The layout of the book is excellent and makes for easy reading. Interestingly it has more material in it than the previous edition but is a smaller book! This is not done at the expense of font size but rather by clever typography. The writing style is such that the information is easily assimilated. Explanations are clear and concise. Easy access to the information is further aided by numerous and clear tables and figures. Of particular value is the way that key references are identified throughout. These may be seminal studies, outstanding recent reviews or papers of historical significance.

This book has been written for a physician audience, and to me, one of its strengths is the way it integrates physiology with clinical medicine. Context is very important when evaluating test requests, the utility of the results obtained and in the interpretation of the results. This book provides clinical and physiological context throughout. From Chapter 1, which addresses the evolution of the atmosphere in which we exist, through Chapter 13, (a new chapter) which provides a history of respiratory physiology, to chapter 33, on lung transplantation the physiology always has a clinical context. There is a generous amount of anatomy included. Topics are presented in a sometimes surprising completeness. For instance, the discussion of diving and barotrauma concludes with the impact of flying following diving.

This book may not provide the depth of technical knowledge that you need for CRFS, but it does provide a first rate summary of principles and concepts in respiratory physiology. While I could not recommend it as a primary text for studying for CRFS, it is, however, a text that every respiratory scientist should be able to access in their laboratories.