

ANATOMY FOR PLASTIC SURGERY OF THE FACE, HEAD, AND NECK

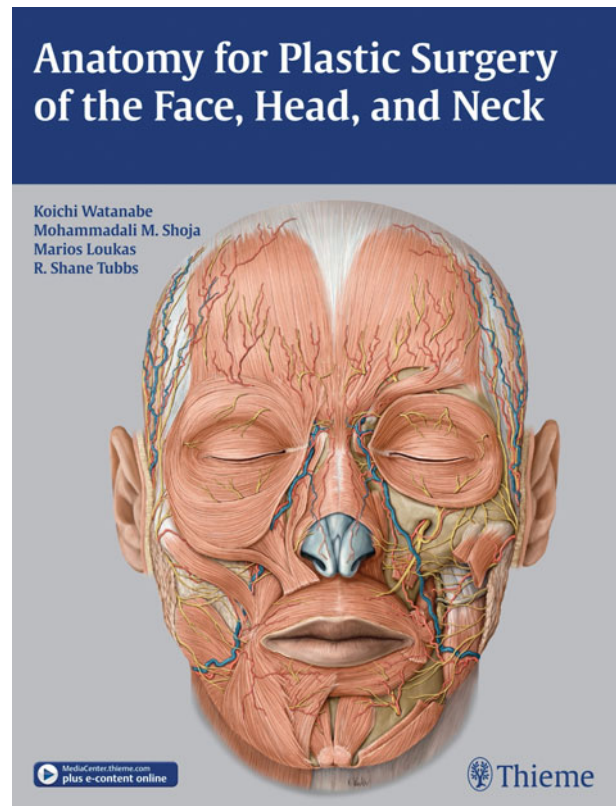
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All too often a textbook makes claims for a widespread appeal, which are, at best, overstated. This is the reverse. I was planning to send this to my tame Plastics expert, Simon in Brighton, but I have inflicted enough on him over the years. At a glance, I saw that this book has many sections which are well beyond the range of our cosmetic and reconstructive colleagues' work, and I wondered why the title is so modest in its relevance.

It is a multi-author work, drawing on a collaboration between Japan, the USA and the West Indies. It is an old-fashioned, well-presented anatomy textbook, in a very traditional style, but it does come with access to five online videos. These are on topics ranging from facial musculature to dissection of the external nose. Well, that sounds like 'for Plastic Surgery', I agree.

Yet, despite the title, the Preface tells us it is 'planned as a head and neck surgical anatomy book for plastic surgeons, head and neck surgeons, (sic) and surgeons who practice in related fields'. I went on to read something that baffled me for ages: 'In most surgical textbooks the procedures are described only in minute detail'. Again it is that comma problem, one too many in the first sentence, one missing in the second. Even the title page got it wrong. You do not have a comma before 'and'. English can be a strange language!

The authors reflect that the anatomy of the head and neck, as it relates to plastic surgery, continues to evolve. Darwin would have agreed, but I would stress that it is our understanding of it, which is, hopefully, showing more rapid evolution. The chapter content is what one would expect, with the time-honoured approach to surgical anatomy, covering osteology, in naming every tuberosity, process and muscle insertion, vascularity, and innervation of the head and neck. Again, I would stress that it is far more comprehensive than the title suggests. I doubt many plastic surgeons find themselves concerned about the mid skull base or petrous apex, for example, and most would be happy to leave us to find the intratemporal facial nerve. Orbital anatomy is covered to a level that would grace many an ophthalmic tome. This took me back to my early days at medical school and then the nightmare of the Primary Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons ('FRCS') examination, at Queen



Square, London. They liked me so much in the viva voce that they asked me to return in six months.

The chapters vary in how much they adapt all this knowledge to truly applied surgical anatomy. I was surprised that the external nose merited only just over four pages of text, with some illustrations. Sensory Nerves of the Head and Neck, in contrast, proved fascinating, with great coverage of clinical relevance. There are lots of axial computed tomography scans of the paranasal sinuses, again well beyond the scope of the title. The fun is to spot the surgery and where it went wrong. There is an image of some very nicely opened middle meatuses, but an unfortunate complication of septal surgery, if one looks closely.

The illustrations are in superb quality colour (as expected from this publisher), whether as diagrams, clinical photographs or cadaver dissection images. This is a very good basic science reference book for any surgeon in the field of head and neck (the oral and maxillofacial chapters are amongst the best). My only real complaint is that the title should have been 'Surgical Anatomy of the Face, Head, and Neck', but without that last comma of course!

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