

# Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary, 30<sup>th</sup> Edition

**Author:** W.A. Newman Dorland  
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My first thought on being invited to review this book was "Why? It's a dictionary... look it up." My second thought was how disgruntled I was by being rudely interrupted on my maternity leave, 36 weeks pregnant and in the middle of Harry Potter, Order of the Phoenix.

On putting down Harry Potter and picking up Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary, I was interested to find a few similarities between the two books. These included ridiculously large words I had no knowledge of and delightfully gory descriptions of various pathological conditions. The one thing that wasn't in Harry Potter was the many colour photographs and schematic diagrams to accompany the gory descriptions (must write to J.K. Rowling in regards to that oversight).

This edition of Dorland's includes over 3000 new terms and over 800 of them relate to complementary and alternative medicine. A CD Rom is also included with this edition and comes with Dorland's spell checker program, which is very handy for any sort of writing, from letters to General Practitioners to PhD Theses.

What I found useful was being able to look up particular conditions or syndromes, such as Von Willebrand's disease,

which a patient had asked me about one week earlier, and being able to provide them with a clear and concise description of the disease. For something like this Dorland's is a quick and easy reference when you are consulting without having to labour through pathology texts, with their pages of detail your patient is not interested in. Included are descriptions of surgical procedures, which I again found useful for a quick reference to what patients may describe in their medical history.

More relevant to our fields are the great colour diagrams of the muscular, skeletal, venous, arterial, lymphatic and nervous systems. These systems are listed in the appendices along with reference intervals for the interpretation of lab tests and abbreviations of commonly used symbols and terms. I particularly found the list of phobia's in appendix ten fun reading, especially "Phobophobia" – the fear of developing a phobia! OK, I think we all know once I was reading the list of phobia's it was time to return to Harry Potter.

As a dictionary I found it extremely user friendly and felt overall it is a very handy reference book to keep on the shelf at work or CD to keep close to the computer. Now if you'll excuse me Harry Potter awaits....

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