

## BOOK REVIEW

# Medical jargon made easy

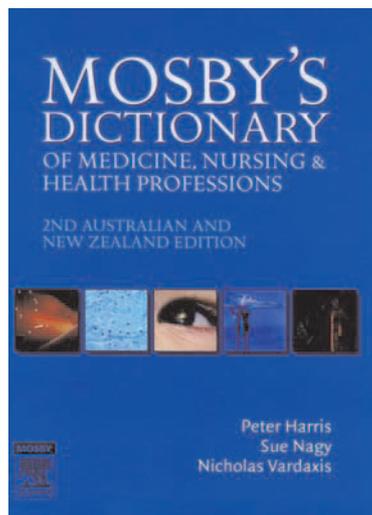
**Mosby's dictionary of medicine, nursing & health professions, 2nd Australian and New Zealand edition.** Peter Harris, Sue Nagy, Nicholas Vardaxis, editors. Sydney: Elsevier Australia, 2009 (xvi + 2015 pp, \$89.00). ISBN 978 0 7295 3909 8.

**THE FIRST** Australian and New Zealand edition of this popular American dictionary was published in 2006. It was a landmark achievement, with its Asia-Pacific orientation in both content and style. For instance, entries included the “bluebottle jellyfish”, common to Australasian waters. Local spelling and phonetic pronunciation guides were also provided.

However, almost as soon as it was published, the need for a continuing process of review and revision was recognised. And so, editors-in-chief Peter Harris, Sue Nagy and Nicholas Vardaxis led a team of 60 specialists to produce further refinements, which resulted in this second edition.

The language of medicine is constantly evolving to keep up with the latest developments in research and technology. Thus, some of the new terms in the second edition include Hendra virus, Nipah virus, swine flu and vancomycin-resistant enterococcus.

There were some 40 000 entries and 2400 colour images in the first edition. More than 500 images, 300 drug entries and



73 tables have been added or updated in this edition. The many useful appendices cover areas such as nutrition guidelines, immunisation schedules, infection control and herb–drug interactions. Charts and graphs range in content from lung sounds and burn depths to contraceptive effectiveness and cardiac arrhythmias.

Simple devices such as extensive cross-referencing and a thumb-style index make navigation easy.

The bonus “Evolve” website access provides many free online resources, such as all the images from the book, directories of key health organisations and health promotion information. This strategy has enabled the dictionary to be confined to a single volume that is still kept current through the website.

This dictionary can help health professionals and students become familiar with new medical terminology and techniques, and thus improve their communication and outcomes. Certainly, as a proofreader for the Journal, I’m sure to refer to it at least once a week.

**Gita Sankaran**

Scientific Proofreader

*The Medical Journal of Australia, Sydney, NSW*

Sitting in a meeting where jargon is consistently thrown over your head can be overwhelming and leave you feeling confused about it. An SDK is like a box of Betty Crocker Cake Mix. The SDK is simply the base to make a cake. If you want the cake that the box offers, just follow the standard steps. However, with the cake mix, if you want to be creative and create your own special type of cake you easily can. So, if your box is for a vanilla cake, there is nothing stopping you from adding strawberries and chocolate frosting, or sprinkles and buttercream icing. This allows you to take the existing option of buying a cake mix and make it your own, rather creating your own cake mix.

Medical statistics made easy. Michael Harris General Practitioner and Lecturer in General Practice, Bath, UK. and. Gordon Taylor Senior Research Fellow in Medical Statistics, University of Bath, Bath, UK. We have tried to cut down the jargon as much as possible. If there is a word that you do not understand, check it out in the glossary. How this book is designed. Every section uses the same series of headings to help you understand the concepts. How important is it? We noted how often statistical terms were used in 250 randomly selected papers in mainstream medical journals. All the papers selected were published during the last year in the British Medical Journal, the Lancet, the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association.