

## Neuromusculoskeletal examination and assessment. A handbook for therapists. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

*Edited by Petty, N. 2011 (Reprinted 2013) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. ISBN: 9780702055041. Soft cover; 447 pages*

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This text provides a systematic guide to the examination of patients presenting with neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction with a focus on the development of technical and clinical reasoning skills. It is designed for Physiotherapy students but could also be utilised as a resource for those in their first years of practice. I am quite familiar with this textbook from the UK (and its previous editions), as at AUT in the musculoskeletal programme we have recommended this text to our students as a useful resource to support their learning.

As with previous editions, this text provides a detailed description of the principles of the subjective and objective examination as introductory chapters. The chapter on subjective interview provides a very thorough description of the theoretical rationale underpinning the assessment process. Thereafter each chapter, written by a different author, is dedicated to a region of the body, providing detailed information on the clinical examination of spinal and peripheral joints (including the temporomandibular region). Throughout the text the information is presented in a systematic logical fashion and is accompanied by graphics that are clearly described within the text. There has been an attempt to present a variety of techniques or tests that are considered useful diagnostic tools whereby the sensitivity and specificity of these tests have been provided; however, presenting information such as this has the potential to conflict with recent evidence more readily available. With respect to some of the techniques described (e.g. cervical spine chapter) there does seem to be a bias towards the Maitland style prone accessory joint assessment, which is not consistent with the combined physiotherapy-osteopathic approach currently taught at the AUT Department of Physiotherapy and NZMPA continuing education programme. However there are several techniques described that are consistent with our practice here in New Zealand.

New to the text is a chapter on the principles of assessment in particular developing a hypothesis, which obviously will help to strengthening the clinical reasoning process for a clinician requiring some assistance with this. Further to this additional photographs have been added to this edition, which support the various assessment techniques described in each of the regional chapters. Consistent with previous editions, presented at the end of each chapter is an extensive reference list should you wish to explore any of the supporting literature in more detail. Key authors and their theories and supporting evidence are threaded throughout the text for each relevant chapter including Jull, Bogduk, Maitland, McConnell, McKenzie,

Mulligan, Butler, Hodges, Lee, Margarey, Sahrman, Panjabi etc). Therefore the text has quite a well rounded approach with respect to its content.

There never seems to be the perfect text; however, it is my belief that this text has many positives. The highlight of the text is the introductory chapters including the new chapter on assessment. I see this text as a very good choice to assist with the clinical reasoning process as it simplifies what can be quite a complex process. For students, physiotherapists at the beginning of their career, or physiotherapist who might be involved in clinical education, this text would be a useful adjunct in establishing a strong foundation with which to build future learning.

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