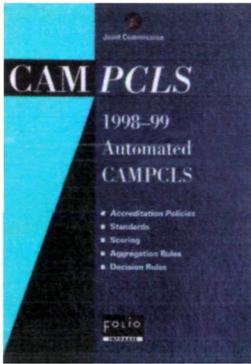


MEDIA REVIEWS



**1998-99
Automated
Comprehensive
Accreditation
Manual for
Pathology and
Clinical
Laboratory Service
(Automated
CAMPCLS)**

**Joint Commission on
Accreditation of**

Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

\$995, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill; JCAHO ([630] 792-5215); 1998.

Requires: IBM-compatible personal computer; recommends 486/33 (or greater) processor with at least 4 MB extended or expanded memory and 12 MB hard disk space; Windows 3.x or Windows 95.

The 1998-99 *Automated CAMPCLS* is a computer version of the JCAHO *Laboratory Standards Manual*. Featuring a user-friendly Windows format plus examples of implementation, sample questions, and scoring guidelines, this update of the 1996-97 edition would be useful to pathologists, directors, managers, supervisors, and senior medical technologists who work with JCAHO standards. Although expensive compared with the laboratory standards manual, *Automated CAMPCLS*, depending on the number of users, may be a more cost-effective investment than several hard-copy manuals.

The complete program is an infobase (reference material designed and formatted for easy navigation) that can be installed on a network (though we did not have that capability). The well-organized, 15-chapter user manual presents step-by-step directions with pictures of the screen at related steps. After installing the program with five of the six disks provided (disk six to be used only for network setup of files), the user immediately views the program manager screen with a CAMPCLS icon that opens into the Windows screen. In the Windows screen pull-down menus and action icons are grouped into a customizable "Toolbelt."

Navigation within the program is easy. To access a section of the infobase, the user simply double-clicks on the appropriate (+) icon associated with a heading or subheading found in the table of contents. Related areas are accessible through links, the most common of which is the "jump link" with words, phrases, and "Standard IDs" shown in various colors. The mouse cursor, when placed on a link launch point, changes to a hand symbol, which, when double-clicked, retrieves the associated text. "Backtracking" returns the user to the starting point. Query, Program, Pop-up Windows (for footnotes), and Object Windows (for graphics) comprise other links.

By creating "shadow" files that are separate from the main infobase, users can customize the manual without altering the original infobase file. The Notes feature permits the addition of personal comments to the text, while the Tagging option allows users to label records for other actions, such as printing. With use of Highlighting, sections of text can be marked with a specific color or format. The Groups feature allows users to place related records together for an individual, department, or service. These features would be useful when many share the program; individuals could sort or mark standards and related text pertaining to their areas of interest.

The Query option helps to locate keywords or topics. Proximity Query presents keywords in context, and the number of "hits" (how often a word or phrase appears in the infobase) is also displayed. Although the number-of-hits function is useful for locating text, page numbers would also be helpful because, unlike hits, they appear at the bottom of printed pages. Also, page numbers do not correlate with those of the infobase; when a group of pages is printed, numbering begins anew. Printing options include Highlighted Sections, Tags, Groups, Records-By-Hit, and Queries. Although printing of Highlighted Sections did not work when tried, printing by tags, records-by-hits, and queries responded as expected.

Lynn D. Ulmer, MS, MT(ASCP)

Laboratory Education Specialist

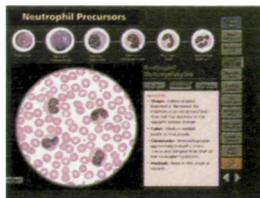
Karen Tinsley, MT(ASCP)

Technical Manager, Department of Laboratories
Orlando Regional Healthcare System
Orlando, Fla



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Hematography II

Karen Lofsness

\$195; Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota [(612) 625-9490]; 1997.

Requires: 8 MB of RAM; 2 MB of available hard drive space; 13-in monitor with 256 colors; double-speed CD-ROM drive; Windows (95 and 3.1) and Macintosh compatible.

Karen Lofsness, associate professor of hematology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, has developed a CD-ROM that is an interactive tutorial designed to display, contrast, and describe immature and abnormal human WBCs. *Hematography II* is intended to assist learners in identifying the morphology and characteristics of immature WBCs, WBC variants, and other abnormal WBCs. The program includes "DIFF Exams" to test the user's knowledge and skill in identifying abnormal WBCs. Therefore, it is useful for students or laboratory personnel who need to learn or be cross trained in hematology. It also is an excellent way to document proficiency for regulatory purposes. As with *Hematography I* (Philadelphia, Pa: FA Davis, 1996), anyone familiar with Windows or the Macintosh will find this program easy to load, set up, and use.

The opening screen includes buttons for learning objectives and guidelines for use. There are nine content sections, the DIFF exams, and buttons for program help and a dedication. The nine content sections are "Morphologic Guidelines," "Blood Cell Maturation Chart," "Neutrophil Precursors," "Reactive Changes in Neutrophils," "Reactive Changes in Lymphocytes," "Hereditary Leukocyte Anomalies,"

"Nucleated RBCs," "Correcting WBC Counts for NRBCs," and "Compare and Contrast."

"Morphologic Guidelines" discusses the general characteristics of cells as they mature and grow. Moving from screen to screen is easy by clicking a left or right arrow. The text is illustrated with photomicrographs of cells or charts. The ample terminology definitions, including hyperlinks to specific topics or ideas within the program, allow the user to "drill down" to more detailed levels or explanations.

The maturation chart, as the name implies, shows the maturation stages of blood cells. This chart can be seen at the University of Minnesota Web site (www.umn.edu/hema).

The succeeding sections describe the topics in detail and are very well done. The "Compare and Contrast" section provides side-by-side comparisons of similar or like-appearing cells, such as neutrophil precursors, monocytes, and reactive lymphocytes. The text offers advice on differentiating and contrasting similar cells, and there is a brief self-test.

DIFF exams are offered at two levels in the form of 100-cell leukocyte differentials with different formats for testing proficiency. In level 1, the user is given feedback, an explanation of the choices made in identifying cells, a tally of the results, and a chance to review and revise incorrect choices. Results are not recorded. Level 2 provides only one chance to identify cells with no feedback or review. A password-protected "Test Module" can be turned on to record user results. The user is identified by an identification code chosen by the licensee.

Accompanying material states that the images and cells are scanned from actual blood smears. The images are clear and thoroughly explained. From field to field or section to section there was virtually no qualitative variation in color, staining, or appearance of cells. There seemed to be no reuse of cells from section to section or in the DIFF Exams. The text and photomicrographs complement each other, making this program an excellent tool for teaching or learning the identification of abnormal differential counts. The ability to test and record the user's results provides good documentation of proficiency. This CD-ROM is an excellent value. 

Dale J. Duca, MT(ASCP)SH
Information Management Coordinator
Laboratory Information Services
Division of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Cleveland

Books Received

- Diagnostic Virology Protocols.* Stephenson JR, Warnes A. Totowa, NJ: Humana Press; 1998, 384 pp, \$99.50.
- Fundamentals of Diagnostic Mycology.* Fisher F, Cook NB. Philadelphia, Pa: WB Saunders; 1998, 352 pp, \$39.95.
- Handbook of Lipoprotein Testing.* Rifai N, Warnick GR, Dominiczak MH, eds. Washington, DC: AACC Press; 1997, 598 pp, \$75.
- Hematologic Pathophysiology.* Schiffman FJ. Philadelphia, Pa: Lippincott-Raven; 1998, 400 pp, \$29.95.
- Introduction to Human Disease.* Kent TH, Hart MN, eds. Stamford, Conn: Appleton & Lange; 1998, 656 pp, \$47.95.
- Pathophysiology: A Self-Instructional Program.* Burns MV. Stamford, Conn: Appleton & Lange; 1998, 754 pp, \$39.95. 