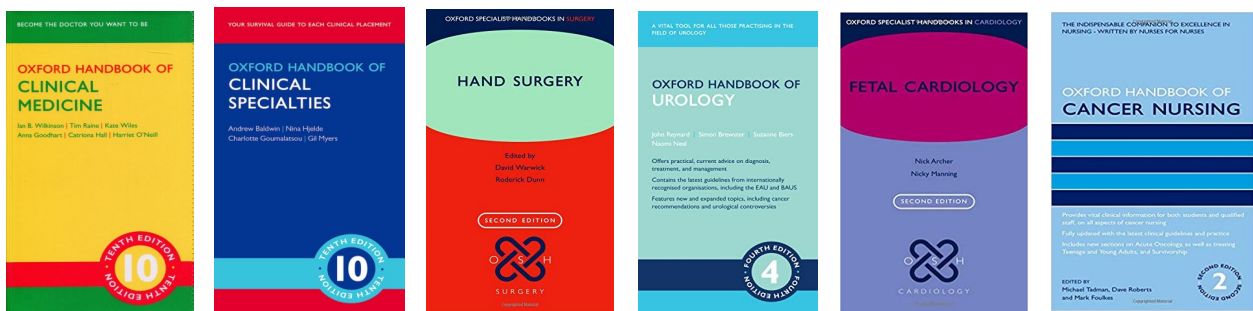# Oxford Medicine Online

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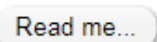
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Contents

[+] **Front Matter**

1 **Thinking about medicine**

2 **History and examination**
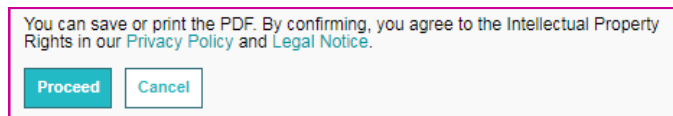
3 **Cardiovascular medicine**

Taking a history

Taking a good history is an art and an essential skill: 80% of diagnoses should be made on history alone, with the signs you elicit adding an extra 10% and tests only giving the final 5% or so. Do not rely on signs or investigations for your diagnosis, but use them rather to confirm what you suspected. Try to put the patient at ease: a good rapport may relieve distress. Introduce yourself and check whether the patient is comfortable. Be conversational rather than interrogative. Start with open questions, allow the patient to tell their story, but if they stray off topic, gently steer them back towards the important points.

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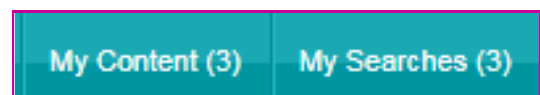
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