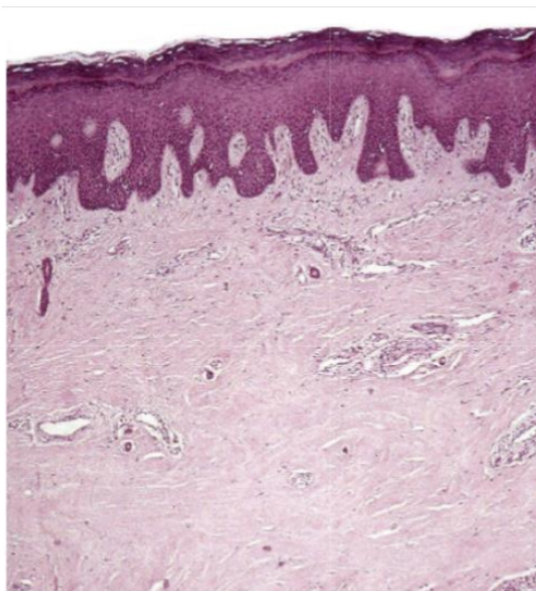


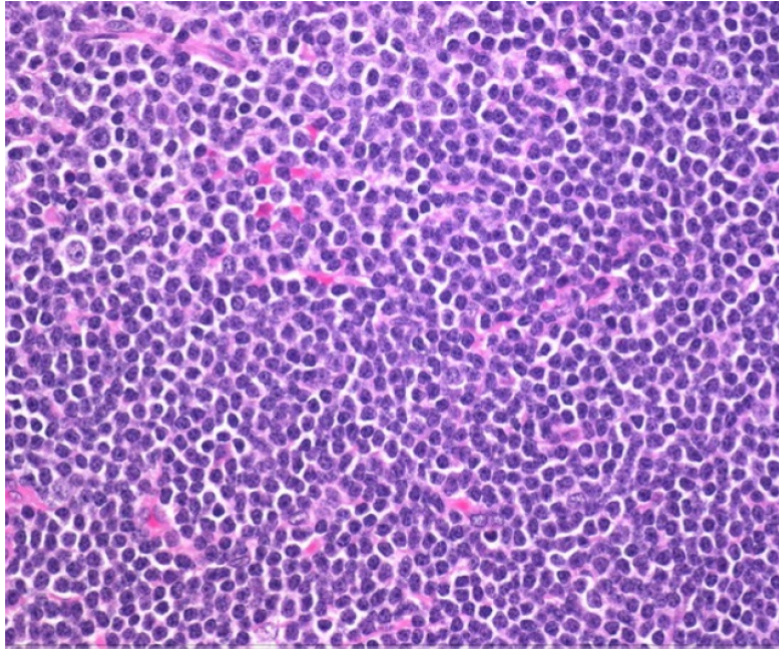
## Microscope Hunting for Med School

Having just completed my first semester of medical school, I found myself exposed to countless images of histological and pathological slides. This made me curious of which microscopes were used for each image, and which types of microscopes are generally used by physicians. I started with an internet search, asking "Which kind of microscopes do pathologists use?" Though the internet can be a great resource for a lot of information, I was pretty disappointed at what my search turned up, as a cursory search said that pathologists use transmission electron microscopes. Knowing little about microscopes, I asked my great uncle (who does not like me referring to him as such) how much one of these would cost. Suffice it to say, the figure he gave me was far out of my price range, and likely out of the price range of most practicing pathologists. Surely, more economical options produced at least some of the images I had seen in lecture slides. I went back through some of the images used in different lectures and sent them to my uncle to ask him which microscopes could have been used to capture them. Much to my relief, I learned that I would not need to sell both of my kidneys to produce similar images on my own, as a standard compound microscope would be able to get the job done.

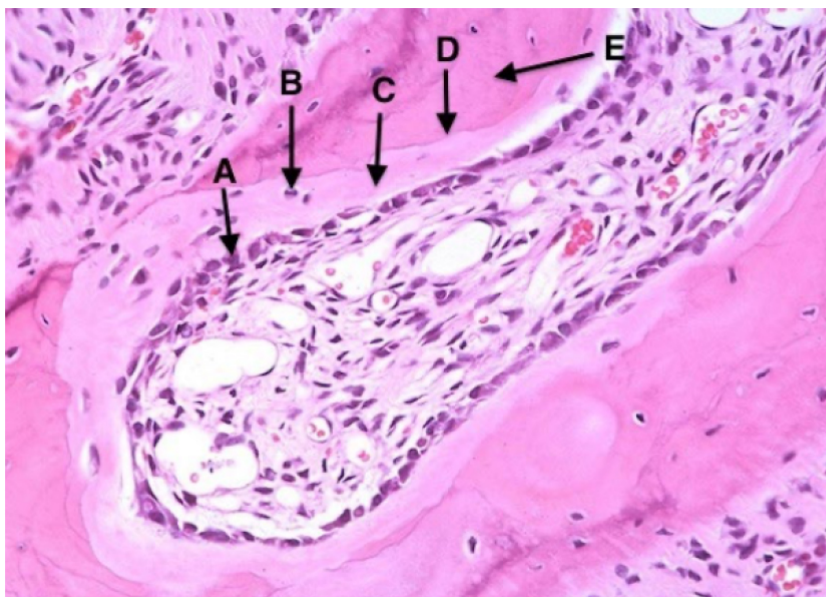
Having established which kind of microscope I would want, I started to look for which make and model would best fit my needs and budget. In order to see blood cells or protozoa, I found that I would need 400x magnification. As for budget, I would like to find something under \$500. I would also like to find a 'scope from a manufacturer with a strong track record of reliability and durability and is in good condition. Upon consulting my uncle, I found that it could be a tall task to find a microscope that fits these specifications on my budget. However, it is not impossible. My uncle told me several stories about him tracking down used microscopes with the help of friends and acquaintances he had made through this hobby to get a good deal on them. In addition to providing me with hope that I could one day find the right microscope, it also revealed to me another dimension of microscopy. I realized that microscopy isn't just about exploring the world beyond what the naked eye can see (although that is its primary focus), but it's also a community. People can share their stories and findings with each other in online journals and help each other find spare parts or good deals. It takes more than just owning a microscope to contribute to the community, but it is an important first step, and one I hope to make soon.



- This is an image taken from the skin of a patient with scleroderma



- Seen here is an hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stain of a lymph node



- This is a slide of normal, healthy osteoid

Comments to the author, Kennet Sorenson welcomed, email ksorenson9 AT gmail DOT com

Published in the January 2023 issue of *Micscape* magazine.

[www.micscape.org](http://www.micscape.org)