



# A hypertext resource for self-directed learning

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Visit this website:

<http://www.siu.edu/~dking2/index.htm>

New URL: <https://histology.siu.edu>

or just Google "histology".

## Introduction

During the 2000s, **SIU School of Medicine** supported creation by David King of an instructional website for introductory histology, characterized by extensively hyperlinked text and images to facilitate efficient self-directed learning. In July 2021, this website was relocated to [histology.siu.edu](https://histology.siu.edu).

You are invited to consider how similar resources could complement traditional media, especially in a problem-based curriculum.

This resource has been reviewed and listed by:



## Background

Learning resources should be appropriate to the curriculum environment in which they are used.

*Self-directed learners, when they first encounter an unfamiliar subject, may not appreciate the value – or even the existence – of introductory concepts and vocabulary.*

*But conventional media are seldom designed for use in a self-directed, problem-based curriculum.*

Conventional media (e.g., textbooks) are designed for the context of traditional courses.

*Textbooks introduce key concepts in a linear order, chapter by chapter.*

*Although an index can direct students to particular facts, students may also need structured guidance toward background needed to apprehend those facts.*

*Even internet resources commonly just reproduce conventional media (text chapters, lecture notes), without exploiting the advantages of hypertext.*

**Hypertext resources** can offer intuitive nonlinear navigation of unfamiliar material.

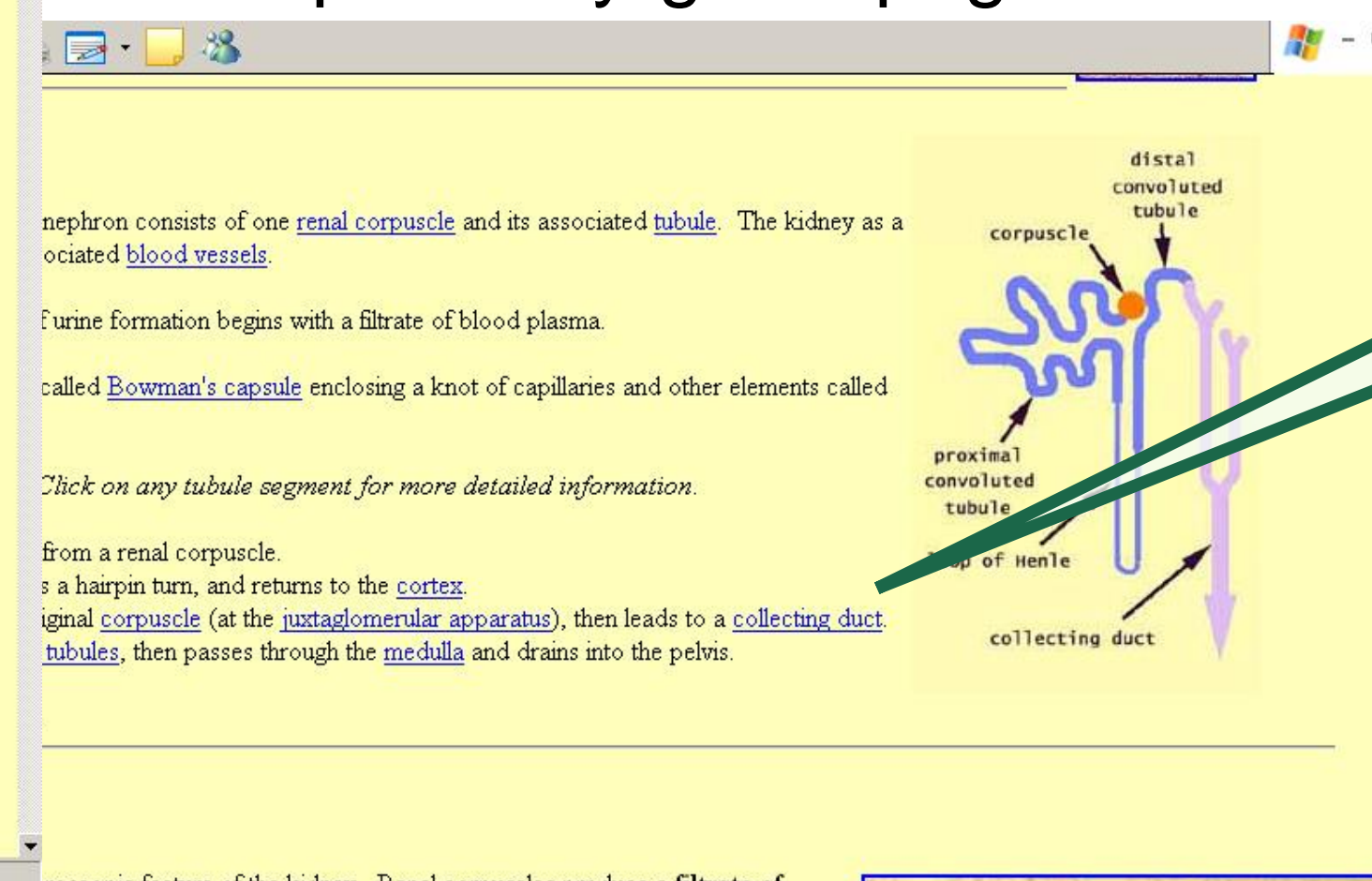
*Hyperlinks can supply cross references from any particular content location to all associated supporting concepts, with frequent pointers back to basics.*

*Appropriately hyperlinked web-pages can emulate the guidance that a personal tutor might provide.*

the home page



sample study-guide page

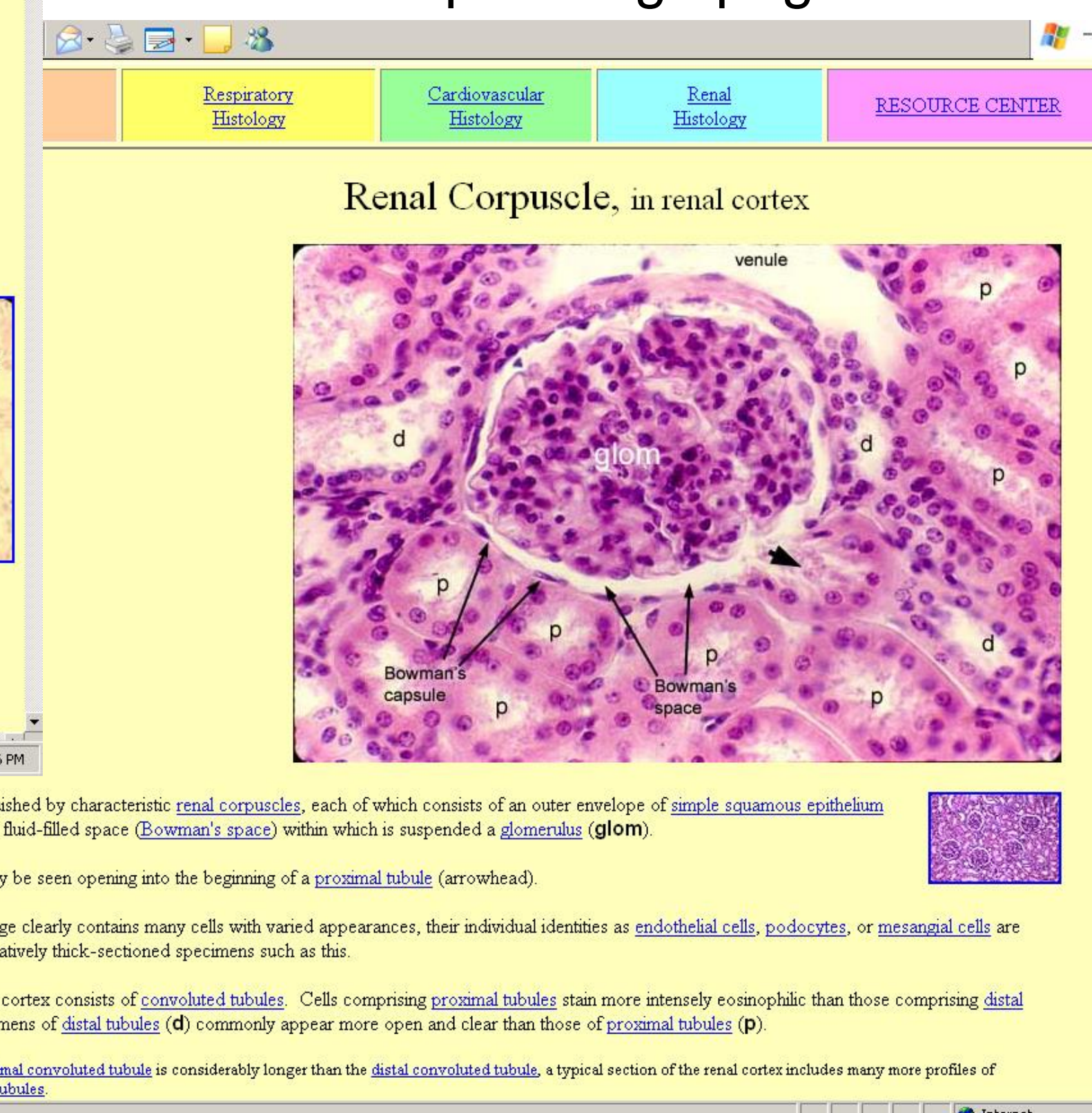


Questions?

Contact [dgking@siu.edu](mailto:dgking@siu.edu)

Lots of links

sample image page



Thumbnail links to full-size images

Lots more links

## Principal features

Guidance to introductory concepts is readily available from any point.

*Most content-specific terms are active hyperlinks.*

*These abundant links offer easy access to background explanations as well as definitions and examples.*

All topics are multiply interlinked.

*On every page, a top menu links to several "hub" pages.*

*Every topic is accessible from any other via a minimal number of links.*

## Additional features

Content is essentially self-contained.

*This site offers the scope of an introductory textbook, with about five hundred individual pages.*

*Effective use does not depend on consultation of traditional resources.*

Built-in search engines provide efficient indexing.

Interactive self-assessment exercises are incorporated.

Content is enriched with links to appropriate external sites.

## Website development

Simple formatting avoids expensive software development.

*This website was created using only the most basic features of Dreamweaver™, with original micrographs adapted in Photoshop™.*

Multiple small files are easier to manage than large files.

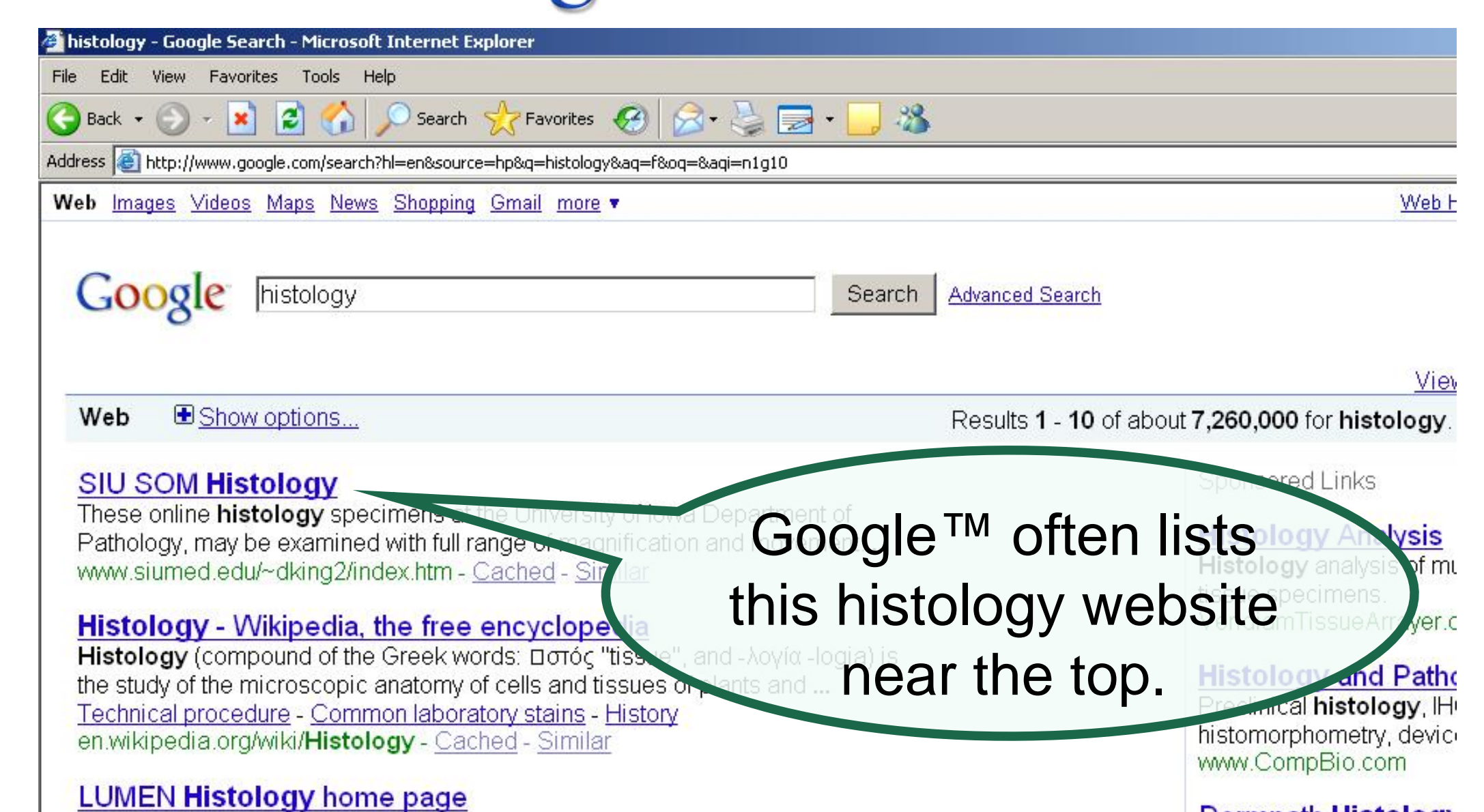
*Small, single-topic pages can load quickly.*

*Multiple pages with hierarchical file organization facilitate addition and revision.*

Nevertheless, ambitious websites involve substantial resource investment.

*This resource, occupying about 0.3 GB of server memory, represents three years' development effort.*

*Hypertext adaptation of preexisting materials, such as handouts, should be relatively less time-intensive.*



Google™ often lists this histology website near the top.

## User comments (unsolicited)

Your site was a godsend. . . I can tell you care about students.  
*medical student, Illinois*

Your website has helped me tremendously! It is very coherent and well planned out. The links are fabulous.  
*student, Canada*

After going through some sections of your website I realised how good the website really is. It has everything we need to know for our Histology exams and it's very easy to navigate as well.  
*medical student, Pakistan*

. . . laid out beautifully. Absolutely superb!!!!  
*pathology resident, California*

My \$90 Patho text book doesn't compare to your site... I have been to a lot of other anatomy / physiology sites on the web and yours simply "draws me in."  
*nursing student, Illinois*

An amazingly comprehensive yet easy to understand website! Sure beats boring textbooks!  
*medical student, Canada*

Your website is a wonderful resource.  
*epidemiology professor, Maryland*

. . . such beautiful work that has made our learning a delight.  
*medical student, Canada*

Probably the best resource I have yet come across this year in any subject.  
*medical student, SIU*

Great histology reference for review.  
*pathology resident, Texas*

An awesome site. . . I am charmed by the logical progression.  
*premed student*

Great teaching material!  
*pathology instructor, Israel*

I would like to congratulate you on your wonderful site. . . I am sure that students around the world appreciate it immensely.  
*medical student, South Africa*