

Principles of pediatric pharmacology

Lars O. Boréus, M.D., New York, 1982, Churchill Livingstone, 211 pages, \$32.00.

This book, which is part of a continuing series of monographs on clinical pharmacology, is an excellent basic primer in developmental clinical pharmacology. The text is organized according to a logical sequence of drug disposition (absorption, distribution, biotransformation, and excretion). These chapters are followed by unique chapters dealing with drug receptors and developmental pharmacokinetics. The final two chapters deal with the important topics of drug compliance and ethics in pediatric research. The chapters are well organized, clearly written, and concise, with adequate references for further pursuit of the subject matter. A concluding section is presented with each chapter, which succinctly summarizes the contents for a rapid overview and important reflection on the pertinent materials presented.

The text is primarily directed to the reader who is interested in a rapid overview of the principles of developmental pediatric pharmacology. The student, rather than the pediatric clinical pharmacology researcher, will find this text useful. Although not destined for every house officer and practicing pediatrician's bookshelf, the text will be a useful addition to the libraries of academic institutions and hospitals involved in the training of pediatricians.

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Pediatrics: An approach to independent learning,

C. William Daeschner, Jr., M.D., editor, New York, 1983, \$24.95. John Wiley & Sons, 646 pages

This book consists of 25 self-instructional units geared to the needs of the basic clerkship student, and is intended to be a guided introduction to much of the core knowledge necessary to build the proper groundwork for further learning in pediatrics. The units have been tested for several years by students at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and include most of the problem-oriented material needed for coverage of the various organ systems as they are seen clinically. They are designed to be used selectively along with textbook assignments and other learning experiences.

Students at a loss to know where to begin to learn needed pediatric material will find these units useful. The format is good. Objectives are stated, followed by either a statement outlining prerequisite knowledge or questions testing same. There is no excess verbiage in the selection of material deemed pertinent, and questions designed to give feedback to the student are included, with the answers at the end of the unit. The units are excellent and should help the faculty to cut down on the formal presentation of core material. More of the responsibility for learning is appropriately placed on the student.

Some units will be chosen by all for study, others because of a particular interest or need. Tables and diagrams are well chosen

and lucid. The unit on congenital heart disease in children is particularly helpful and meets a real need for a compact logical presentation that this reviewer has sought for years. Material of a global nature, such as patient and family education, care of patients with sustained loss of health, and health maintenance needs, is presented neatly without the rambling, diffuse approach that is often used. All units are current in instructional material, and the policy of emphasizing sound fundamentals avoids the problem of the book being out of date by the time it is presented.

This book will not replace current texts, but it should be a stimulating starting point for the self-motivated student and a well-structured guide for the student who is less organized. Teachers will want to use this format in developing units of their own, and will discover the tremendous amount of work already accomplished for them in this approach to pediatric learning.

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Pediatric rheumatology for the practitioner

Jerry C. Jacobs, M.D. New York, 1982 Springer-Verlag, 556 pages. \$36.00

Pediatric rheumatology is a small but rapidly advancing field of specialization whose American pioneers have produced the early trainees who are just beginning to fill the gaps in medical school child health faculties. Several of those early investigators of rheumatic disorders in children, such as Dr. Jacobs, have now successfully directed their energies toward the development of much needed, comprehensive texts.

This book, oriented toward the general pediatrician and family practitioner, is filled with practical diagnostic and treatment guidelines. Its easy to read format starts with an excellent eight-page table of contents, and includes many helpful tables, schemas, and reference lists. It also utilizes occasional illustrative "case reports" that are brief and keep the reader clinically oriented toward actual patients.

This is one of those rare texts with well-outlined, useable management techniques for most illnesses. Conversely, discussions of cause and pathophysiology are more limited. Written by one author, this book is a tour-de-force, yet the style communes well with the practicing pediatrician, which Dr. Jacobs is. Particularly well done is the chapter on clinical techniques, including history taking, methods for a good physical examination of the musculoskeletal system, and evaluation of functional status.

Several other sections are notably good, such as the comprehensive treatise on differential diagnosis, which has properly been brought to the front of the text to reflect the relative likelihood of various conditions being seen by the general physician. This chapter clearly describes the many nonrheumatic musculoskeletal disorders that can mimic the rheumatic illnesses. Similarly, the chapters on vasculitic syndromes and "models of connective tissue

disease" are complete and well structured. The chapter on juvenile rheumatoid arthritis is comprehensive, yet pragmatic, begins with a nice index of "clues to some unusual causes of arthritis in children," and contains well-organized treatment sections for each of the subtypes of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis.

The text has only a few weaknesses, possibly more obvious to a fellow subspecialist. Dr. Jacobs perhaps overemphasizes the frequency and importance of the spondyloarthropathies of childhood, relative to other pediatric rheumatic disorders; but in the process, he clarifies our limited understanding of the natural history and severity of these diseases. The sections on systemic lupus erythematosus and scleroderma are perhaps less comprehensive by virtue of their reliance on adult literature references, and their discussions of treatment could be somewhat strengthened. What to ask of and expect from the physiatrist and physical and occupational therapists are not covered in depth. This text clearly notes that some observations are based largely on personal experience, although this is tempered by the author's willingness to say, "We don't know."

In particular, the excellence of this textbook can be measured by its sensitive understanding of the partnership between child, parent, and health care team that must occur to facilitate amelioration of the many illnesses associated with arthritis. Dr. Jacobs emphasizes "the importance of positive physician attitudes in minimizing rather than creating dysfunction," and effectively convinces us that, even without curative new drugs or techniques, we have seen dramatic improvements in functional outcome for these patients over the past 20 years. Its perspective concludes with a clear recognition that at all individual and societal levels, attitudes, coping skills, and physical and emotional development are critical to the outcome in handicapped children with rheumatic disorders.

Dr. Jacobs touches clearly the large body of knowledge that practitioners, academicians, and social institutions need to know about childhood rheumatic disorders, and perhaps in the process he sends a message to pediatric departmental chairpersons about a neglected area. This book is an excellent aid for the pediatric rheumatologist, but it will become happily dog-eared and well thumbbed by the busy pediatrician, family practitioner, and adult rheumatologist.

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Chronic disorders in adolescence

Mark Scott Smith, M.D., editor, Littleton, Massachusetts, 1982, John Wright, PSG, Inc., 426 pages, \$35.00.

This book is written for primary physicians who treat chronic conditions in adolescents, whether medical problems or physical disabilities. It is an easily read book, divided loosely into two sections. The first presents a summary of normal adolescent physical growth and maturation and outlines adolescent psychosocial and cognitive growth. It includes a series of chapters on topics that apply generally to most chronically ill or handicapped young persons, their friends, and their families. Most of the chapters are clearly and sensitively written and could be supportive to physicians caring for such children.

The second section includes 17 chapters, each discussing a specific category of chronic disorder. The majority of these chapters include discussions of the disease or handicapping condition and its pathophysiology. They present problems unique to adolescents with each disorder, and describe how the disorder may affect adolescents at different stages of psychosocial and cognitive development. Many chapters include practical guidance for the physician caring for these young people.

Some chapters present practical material better than others; most provide good descriptions of the consequences of the disease process. Too few of the authors address the impact of the disorder on sexuality in these children or specific contraceptive recommendations. On the whole, however, the book addresses nicely the unique developmental needs of adolescents and the impact of chronic or disabling disorders on them.

This book will be a good addition to the general pediatrician's library and will provide insight for pediatricians in training, who themselves need support when learning to cope with the behaviors of adolescents with chronic illness.

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