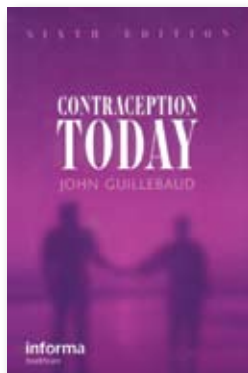


Contraception Today

John Guillebaud

London: Informa Healthcare, 2007

ISBN 978 0 415 41743 3, \$49.00



■ **This is truly a pocketbook for general practitioners and practice nurses offering a comprehensive, evidence based outline of all currently available contraceptive methods. It also emphasises the importance of relationship counselling, confidentiality, review of sexually transmitted infection risk, noncontraceptive benefits of methods and the risk/benefit balance of using different forms of contraception.**

One of the most important points is that iatrogenic ('doctor caused') pregnancies are a reality. They result from avoidable errors or omissions on the part of service providers: especially the omission of sufficient time for the consultation.

The section on combined oral contraceptives is a valuable resource. It presents the comparative risk in a patient friendly format and introduces the World Health Organization system for categorising contraindications. This is an extremely effective system of classifying restrictions into 'always usable', 'broadly usable, be alert', 'caution/counselling' and 'do not use'. It emphasises the importance of a good personal and family history and appropriate follow up.

The increased use of progestogen only pills, injectables and implants brings many advantages but also problems and contraindications that should be borne in mind. The author asks for a pardon for the intrauterine device and outlines a long list of advantages both for copper IUDs as well as the levonorgestrel releasing intrauterine system (Mirena).

Some parts of the book specifically relate to practice in the UK and there is also an acknowledgement in the appendix that 'Often, licensing procedures have not yet caught up with what is widely considered the best evidence based practice'. Guidelines are given for using contraceptive products 'off licence'.

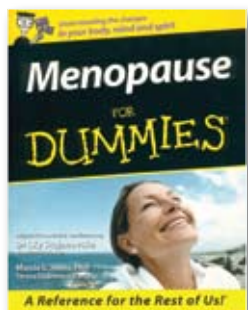
This book finishes with a list of 'believable websites in reproductive health' including an online resource with the names of equivalent pill brands throughout the world.

Jill Benson
Adelaide, SA

**Menopause for Dummies:
Understanding the changes in
your body, mind, spirit**

Lily Stojanovska, Marcia L Jones,
Teresa EichenwaldMilton, Queensland: Wiley
Publishing Australia Pty Ltd, 2006

ISBN 13 978 1 74031 140 3, \$39.95



■ **The authors deserve to be commended for undertaking the challenge of dealing with the complex subject of menopause in the 'for dummies' format. This book covers all aspects of the menopausal transition accurately and informatively for the general reader, using every day language and familiar analogies to explain medical concepts with such phrases as 'ovaries are jumpstarted'.**

The authors have thematically structured the book into four major parts: the biology and psychology of menopause; the effects of the menopausal transition on the body and mind as a whole as explained by the individual chapters on reproduction, breast cancer, osteoporosis, sexuality and cardiovascular disease; hormone replacement therapy, alternative and complementary therapies; and lifestyle issues in relation to 'the change'.

A welcome feature is a whole chapter focusing on the cultural perspectives of menopause. More surprisingly, men are included with an entire chapter devoted to andropause.

Excellent explanations are found throughout the book of why doctors may give a patient diverging and at times puzzling answers to frequently asked questions regarding menopausal issues. This is always followed by advice as to where appropriate medical attention can be obtained.

Crucial information is emphasised by repetition to reinforce understanding of the topics covered. The glossary is comprehensive. Thoroughly researched appendices list other books and reputable websites.

This comprehensively informative book focuses on normalising, debunking and demystifying most of the misconceptions held about menopause. Though the title of this book is 'Menopause for Dummies', no-one would call themselves 'dummy' after reading it! Indeed it motivates the reader toward better health outcomes and quality of life.

Olga Ostrowskyj
Newcastle, NSW