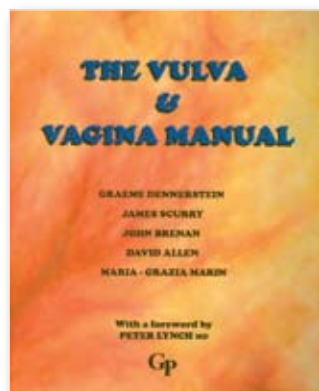


The Vulva and Vagina Manual

Graeme Dennerstein, James Scurry, John Brennan,
David Allen, Maria-Grazia Marin

Melbourne: Gynederm Publishing Pty Ltd, 2005

ISBN 0-646-44531-6, \$195.00



This clever and comprehensive gynaecological textbook presents an interesting and unique approach to the clinical study of female external genital diseases. The book, with its rather quirkily close to the bone title, has five co-authors, including a dermatologist, pathologist, and psychologist, each introducing their own perspective on the management of vulvar disease and its presentations. The main text of vulvo-vaginal disease is separated from the introductory section by a 'modes of presentation' chapter where specific symptoms are allocated to the conditions, 275 in all, listed in this book.

The strengths of this book lie, first, in its unusual triple index system, a standard alphabetical index for rapid access reference, a fold-out back page, colour coded, classification reference of all the vulvo-vaginal diseases addressed by the book, and, the symptom index described above. Second, by its degree of comprehension; the book deals with all aspects of disease, clinically, histopathologically and psychologically, including congenital and developmental anomalies and

normal variations. It has a modern readable approach, rarely didactic, and addresses sexual function issues comprehensively and sympathetically, and with appropriate cultural awareness for our pluralistic society. Importantly, for a subject that does not lend itself to traditional classroom teaching techniques, it is well illustrated.

There is an emphasis on obtaining pathology samples, especially microbiological and histological, such as punch biopsy, to determine the subsequent management of often seemingly macroscopically very similar conditions.

The Vulva and Vagina Manual's comprehensive nature begs the question as to its intended target audience. This is a fine book for the shelf of all budding O&G trainees, an excellent reference for medical students, and a valuable, maybe mandatory, resource for general practice trainees and diplomats.

As a practising GP, I found this book extremely interesting and readable, and overall unequalled as a source of information on vulval problems.

Campbell Hunt
Echuca, Vic

Contraception: an Australian clinical practice handbook

Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia

Ashfield: Family Planning NSW, 2006

\$44.00, available from www.fpahealth.org.au/resources/healthrites/

Concise and easily accessible resource books on the subject of contraception have been in short supply. Contraception: an Australian clinical practice handbook has filled the gap.

Produced by Sexual Health and Family Planning Australia, the handbook is clearly presented and well set out. The editors state that their purpose is to present each topic in a systematic and uniform format, allowing the book to be used as an easy reference. They achieve this aim and also provide an interesting read.

Each chapter is set out in point form and details appropriate history, examination and investigations with each contraceptive choice.

The introductory chapter covers potentially difficult situations that may arise when prescribing different forms of contraception. A particularly useful section presents specific categories of prescribing, including prescribing for women over

35 years of age, diabetics, women postpartum and women with HIV. There are clear guidelines on how to confidently exclude pregnancy before starting any form of contraception.

Chapters are devoted to each area of contraception including one on new contraception methods including the combined vaginal ring and transdermal contraception patch.

The most useful section was on hormonal methods of contraception. The section on the oral contraceptive explains advantages, disadvantages and management of side effects. There is also good advice regarding side effects of Implanon; which are commonly seen in general practice and often difficult to manage.

After reading this handbook I felt confident in dealing with most general practice consultations concerning contraception.

Jordana Rockman
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