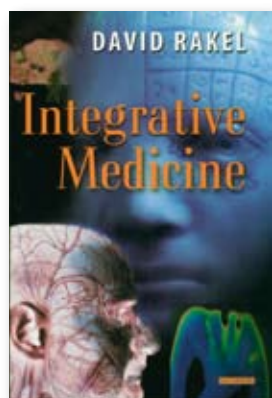


Integrative Medicine

David Rakel

Elsevier, 2005

ISBN 0721692885, \$159.50



Integrative Medicine is a book I highly recommend for medical practitioners, especially those new to integrative medicine. Highly qualified authoritative medical practitioners and specialists have contributed to the chapters. They have selected common general practice presentations such as asthma, depression, diabetes mellitus, nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, neck pain, menopause and psoriasis, and explore the management of these conditions using an integrative and holistic approach.

What makes this book unique is that the authors have not separated the role of orthodox, surgical, pharmaceutical, complementary medicine and

therapies for disease states where appropriate. It encourages doctors to practise medicine from a truly integrative approach, and also encourages consideration of lifestyle factors impacting on a patient's disease such as stress management, nutrition advice, and advice on exercise.

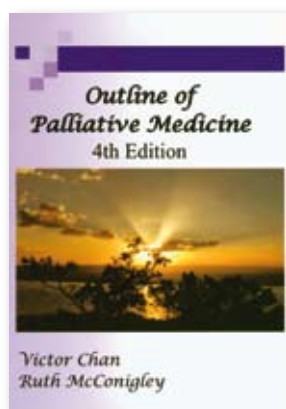
The authors have cited many references for complementary medicines and therapies at the end of the chapters, but these references are limited in some areas and can be improved upon. Limited space may explain the limitation of references. Otherwise, this is an excellent textbook for any general practitioner interested in practising integrative medicine.

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Clayton, Vic

Outline of Palliative Medicine 4th edition, 2005

Victor Chan, Ruth McConigley

\$45, www.members.optusnet.com.au/~vchan



General practitioners can feel much more comfortable dealing with palliative care of their patients with resources such as this excellent, easy to use text.

Palliative care is one area we do not always seek further education – as physicians we prefer to heal. However, it amazed me that as I read *Outline of Palliative Medicine*, that I found it quite uplifting rather than depressive.

Every possible problem is dealt with, anticipated, or prevented. The list of contents ensures easy access of information for each specific problem. For those unfamiliar with pain management, this chapter is excellent, with specific advice about choice of drugs; comparable potency; methods of administration; and advice about the avoidance of associated problems such as constipation, nausea, and dry mouth. Techniques such as soaking old dressings in 1% lignocaine 15 minutes before dressing removal enables a lower dose of analgesia in some circumstances, and the practice of not using steroids after 4 pm to avoid insomnia, are among the gems of advice gleaned from years of experience by the authors.

A sense of hope emanates from *Outline of Palliative Medicine*, as the management

philosophy is adding 'life to days' – the 'ultimate goal is the highest possible quality of life for both patient and family'. The patient is the focus of the care, and this book demonstrates that there is much that can be done to maintain the patient's dignity as well as day-to-day comfort and minimisation of problems. If the patient is suffering from dyspnoea, the causes, assessment and specific management is quickly and easily accessed. Similarly with bowel obstruction, convulsions, and lymphodema. Tables and lists are frequently used in chapters enabling rapid reference.

Outline of Palliative Medicine also deals with the issue of self preservation of the health professional and the need to establish professional 'boundaries', realistic goals, and support.

We all need a copy of *Outline of Palliative Medicine* on our bookshelves – you do not have to read it from cover-to-cover, but can just refer to it as you deal with a presenting problem as you journey with your patient. If this is the only book you have on palliative medicine, you should feel confident that all issues you encounter could be dealt with.

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