

Reproductive and Sexual Health – An Australian Clinical Practice Handbook, 2nd edition

Family Planning NSW

Australia: Family Planning
NSW, 2011
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The foreword of this handbook states that its purpose is 'to facilitate good clinical practice in the delivery of reproductive and sexual health services' and 'to provide concise and currently referenced information for clinicians'. This is an excellent summary of the value of this book from the general practitioner's perspective. The information has a strong practical focus, dealing with diagnosis and management of common clinical problems in a clear and very readable style.

This book is well structured. The first part deals with the history taking and physical examination skills needed for reproductive and sexual health consultations. For general practice trainees and registrars, this is a concise summary of what's important to know; for more experienced GPs it provides good revision. Next are several chapters dealing with common issues relating to the cervix, ovary, vagina and vulva, breast, bladder and pelvic floor. The later chapters cover important clinical situations



including abnormal bleeding, fertility, pregnancy, menopause, sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and sexual assault.

Contraception is not covered in this volume. Sexual Health and Family Planning Australia publish a manual of contraceptive practice titled, Contraception: an Australian Clinical Practice Handbook, and Family Planning NSW have produced

Reproductive and Sexual Health as a companion to that work.

While the omission of contraceptive information is clearly explained, the other glaring omission from the book is not. The information on male sexual health is extremely limited. The initial section deals with history taking and physical exam fairly thoroughly, and the chapters on fertility and STIs cover both the male and female perspective. But there is almost no coverage of testicular problems, erectile dysfunction, prostate disease or other common male sexual health concerns. I was especially sorry to see the absence of any discussion of the role of fathers in the chapter on pregnancy.

There were a couple of other, more minor quibbles I had with the book's content. I thought

a few topics were dealt with too briefly – sexual dysfunction and vulval pain are examples. To be fair, the limited information provided was usually justified by the comment 'more detailed explanation is beyond the scope of this book', and further references were provided. The other minor issue was that some of the resources described were specific to New South Wales, although this was not common and most of the information was relevant and useful for GPs Australia wide.

This book aims to provide an overview, rather than a comprehensive discussion, of common and important sexual and reproductive health problems. It compiles lots of practical, evidence based advice from a wide range of well respected sources. Readers are likely to be familiar with much of the content; the book's strength is that it brings this information together into one succinct and readable volume. Where readers want more detail, the book provides ample references which are up-to-date, mostly Australian based and easy to access.

Carol Lawson
Melbourne, Vic

ABC of Sexually Transmitted Infections, 6th edition

Karen E Rogstad

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Wiley-Blackwell
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Many of you will be familiar with the United Kingdom based ABC series. In 2011, the third edition of the well-received ABC of Sexually Transmitted Infections was published.

This book gives an excellent up-to-date overview of the topic which will be appreciated by general practitioners, emergency room staff, as well as sexual health trainees and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and sexual health



nurses and counsellors.

The ABC of Sexually Transmitted Infections contains several new chapters and many chapters have been updated to discuss the use of new technologies, for example, internet based contact tracing services.

This book is also very well illustrated. The use of colour and graphics holds the reader's interest and make it a delight to read. It has an impressive and well illustrated section on genital dermatosis, which will be very useful for doctors in general practice.

My only criticism of this book is that, as a United Kingdom based publication, most of

the referral links are for the United Kingdom. Although some attempt has been made to include some Australian service details, many useful Australian referral points are lacking.

Overall, the ABC of Sexually Transmitted Infections is a highly readable and useful addition to any GP's library.

Catherine O'Connor
Sydney, NSW