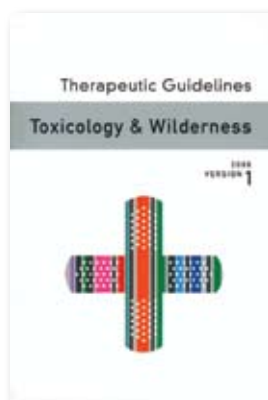


**Therapeutic Guidelines:
Toxicology & Wilderness**Victoria: Therapeutic Guidelines,
2008

ISBN 978 0 9804 764 08, \$39.00



■ This pocket sized book would be useful for general practitioners in most clinical settings. The concise first chapter on resuscitation is accompanied by excellent resuscitation tables at the back of the book. The tables outline recent recommendations regarding adult and paediatric cardiorespiratory arrest as well as drug doses. The information is sufficiently detailed for rural GPs who may have to resuscitate and support patients while awaiting retrieval and for GPs working in anaesthetics or emergency departments.

Subsequent chapters look at assessment and management of all types of poisoning. They contain information on how antidotes and supportive therapies work and how to manage specific complications in adults and children. Every conceivable chemical and drug is covered in detail. The chapter dedicated to poisoning in children has information set out in a table with references to subsequent chapters; this allows fast access to information about an ingested poison or drug.

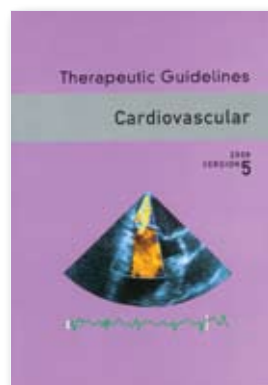
The 'wilderness' section has chapters on the management of various bites and stings as well as specialised advice on diving medicine, electrical injury, burns, drowning, hypo- and hyper-thermia. Again, the presentation of information in flow charts and summary tables would be extremely useful in an emergency setting.

This book is well set out and well written. It is an extremely detailed reference yet has concise tables and practical management advice. Many GPs do not encounter toxicology or wilderness on a daily basis. However, in an emergency it is important to find accurate information quickly. It would be extremely useful to have this book close by.

Claire Poolman
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**Therapeutic Guidelines:
Cardiovascular – Version 5**Victoria: Therapeutic Guidelines,
2008

ISBN 978 0 9804 764 15, \$39.00



■ Many readers will be familiar with the Therapeutic Guidelines books, which offer practical guidance on treatment of common conditions in attractively small volumes. The last edition of the cardiovascular book proved useful to me during my general practice training, so I was keen to review its new incarnation.

This book is written in the same clear and concise manner as the last edition. After an introductory 'getting to know your drugs' chapter, its content largely consists of topics relevant to GPs including hypertension, dyslipidaemia, smoking cessation, ischaemic heart disease, heart failure, atrial fibrillation and syncope. Wisely, the book discusses nonpharmacological treatments as well as drugs. It also debunks some now disproven treatments that initially showed promise in cardiovascular risk reduction, including vitamins and hormone therapy.

This edition seems quite current, although it does not cover the new angina drug ivabradine, and its advice on preoperative beta blockade may not reflect recent evidence. Not all cardiovascular topics are covered: advice on diabetes and endocarditis prophylaxis may be found in other Therapeutic Guidelines volumes.

There are many other publications on the management of hypertension and dyslipidaemia and this volume accords closely with existing Australian guidelines. For example, the list of patients requiring lipid modifying treatment is simply a paraphrase of the current PBS rules. This concordance with existing guidelines is both good and bad: readers will not be confused by conflicting advice, but they also may be disappointed at not receiving a truly fresh, independent opinion.

This book would be more useful for doctors' and patients' decision making if some estimates of absolute benefit or numbers needed to treat were included. I would also like to see more of an emphasis on cost effectiveness, and on treatments for which clinically meaningful effects have been proven. For example, it could be explained that, although ezetimibe reduces LDL cholesterol, its effect on cardiovascular disease is still uncertain.

Despite these misgivings, this book is a useful and accessible reference for GPs and registrars alike.

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