

## Book Reviews

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**Signs & Symptoms in Emergency Medicine: Literature-Based Approach to Emergent Conditions.** Edited by Mark A. Davis, Scott R. Voley, and P. Greg Greenough. 115 pp., illustrated. St. Louis, Mo, Mosby, 1999. \$25.95(paper). ISBN 0-323-00211-0.

Physicians practicing in an emergency or urgent care environment commonly encounter patients who have challenging symptoms often requiring a rapid assessment to rule out serious, potentially life-threatening diagnoses. This publication is a pocket-sized manual that gives the physician rapid access to the most important differential diagnoses pertaining to these patients' complaints.

The text is structured to address a major symptom, such as abdominal pain, by listing all those conditions that are critical to the workup. The specific symptoms and signs, along with a literature-based relative value of their sensitivity in diagnostic accuracy, are described for each condition. Rather than list references in this text, the author has elected to refer the reader to the Web site [www.signsandsymptoms.com](http://www.signsandsymptoms.com), where updated documentation is available.

Thereafter, a recommended acute workup plan is described, with priority given to urgent testing. Comments follow regarding treatment considerations and miscellaneous points of direction, including when and with whom to obtain consultation. Using abdominal pain as an illustration, the differential diagnoses includes aortic aneurysm, mesenteric ischemia, myocardial infarction, perforated ulcer, volvulus, and so on. Although somewhat sparse, excellent radiographs, photographs, and diagrams accompany many of the essential areas under discussion.

Thirty-six areas have been selected for discussion, some of which include back pain, chest pain, fever, red eye, fractures not to miss, headache, hypotension, limping child, rash, shortness of breath, syncope, vaginal bleeding, weakness, and toxic ingestion. A reference card reviews acute cardiac care for the stable and unstable patient and appendicitis with emergency medication dosing. The index is comprehensive.

*Signs & Symptoms in Emergency Medicine* provides excellent brief clinical summaries for the expedited evaluation of each serious possible differential diagnosis associated with common symptoms in the emergency care arena. This book gives the physician a clear and convenient method for rapid consideration and review of serious conditions during the demanding moments of the intense emergency encounter. The additional intentional brevity of each topic makes this manual ideally suited for the day-to-day duties of the emergency physician.

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**Urology for Primary Care Physicians.** By Unyime O. Nseyo, Edward Weinman, and Donald L. Lamm. 399 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1999. \$49. ISBN 0-7216-7148-9.

Family physicians are continually challenged to reflect in their practices the scientific advances that occur across a multitude of specialty areas. They must rely on excellence in reference texts that emphasize the fundamentals of the history and physical examination to define and evaluate a particular symptom or symptom constellation. Certainly, the same holds true for urologic complaints that, however common historically, have shown an increase secondary to patient interest in recent advances in the treatment of sexual dysfunction and the management of prostate disorders. *Urology for Primary Care Physicians* succeeds as a reference primer because it not only offers current information in the field, but it also emphasizes a problem-oriented approach.

The text is divided into 33 chapters. The reward for the reader is in the richness and clinical simplicity of three chapters that describe a systematic approach to urologic evaluation, laboratory investigations in urology, and principles of imaging studies of the genitourinary system. The remaining chapters discuss such topics as upper and lower urinary tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, genitourinary carcinomas, sexual dysfunction in the male, renal function in pregnancy, pediatric enuresis, and urologic emergencies. Discussions are framed in terms of diagnosis, treatment, and clinical outcomes. When controversial issues are addressed, such as the use of prostate-specific antigen testing, they are treated with objectivity and fairness supported by literature review.

The text language is consistently clear and succinct, and urologic terms are well described. One of the strengths of the work is the selection of tables, clinical algorithms, radiographic images, and photographs to complement the written word. The chapter content is further enhanced by sections labeled "clinical pearls" and "highlights" (so-called take-home messages by the authors) and illustrative cases. These features, as well as the current suggested reading lists, make the book additionally attractive to medical students and residents.

*Urology for Primary Care Physicians* is an excellent addition to the library of practicing family physicians. The authors have crafted a well-written, systematic approach to urologic problems and a reference source for specific problems across the spectrum of patients that family medicine serves.

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