

Surgical Problems. The first section provides a basic review of embryology, anatomy, and normal growth, followed by discussions of abnormalities in these areas, including general growth problems, precocious and delayed puberty, and abnormal sexual differentiation. The second section deals fairly comprehensively with such common medical problems as vulvovaginitis, vaginal bleeding, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, eating disorders, depression, and drug abuse. It also highlights areas less commonly found in pediatric or family medicine texts, such as expressive therapy, human immunodeficiency virus infection in adolescents, sports-related problems in reproductive function, and reproductive health care needs of the developmentally disabled. The chapters on surgical problems include information that is probably further removed from the daily practice of most clinicians seeing female pediatric and adolescent patients. Nevertheless, the sections on genital trauma, urologic problems, breast disorders, and chronic pelvic pain are particularly relevant and useful.

Generally the text is very readable, and the subject matter is easily referenced by the Index. There are many photographs in each section, including selected color plates. The graphs and tables are designed to add clarity to the subject textual presentation. Each chapter concludes with a listing of references, although few are from sources after 1991. Special appendices present source material on such topics as medical interviews of sexually abused children, Tanner stages of development, and commonly used medications in the field.

Family physicians and allied health professionals who provide care for pediatric and adolescent patients will find this a useful addition to their library. It is important to remember that the practice of adult gynecology does not always translate directly to the pediatric and adolescent population. Knowledge and appreciation of the differences will certainly improve the quality of care for this group.

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**Practical Dermatology.** By Beth G. Goldstein and Adam O. Goldstein. 310 pp., illustrated. St. Louis, Mosby Yearbook, 1994. \$55 (paper). ISBN 0-8151-3542-4.

Although there are many dermatology texts on the market, I have not encountered one quite like *Practical Dermatology*. This book, written collaboratively by a family physician and a dermatologist, takes a patient-centered approach to dermatology. There is even a subsection entitled "Patient-Centered Therapeutics,"

a term that almost certainly has never been used in a dermatology text. Given that the target audience includes primary care physicians of all stripes, as well as medical students and residents, it makes sense to take a patient-oriented approach to the topic. The authors recognize that diagnosis is often less important than patient education and compliance in determining final outcome. Patient education, in particular, is stressed throughout the book.

The book is attractively and brightly bound, making it easy to find on a cluttered desk or full bookshelf. As are the other medical books in the Mosby series, it is a high-quality paperback. There are more than 100 color photographs and many more black-and-white photographs and drawings.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first deals with dermatologic basics, such as common diagnostic procedures, terminology, types of topical preparations available, and preventive dermatology. The second section discusses common skin dermatoses, and the third addresses cutaneous manifestations of systemic disease. At the end of the book is an appendix that contains patient handout material describing the more common skin ailments.

*Practical Dermatology* is an excellent book with many strengths, several of which deserve special mention here. The first section of the book contains a fine discussion of topical therapy, including such things as the differences among gels, lotions, and emollients. The section on techniques for common procedures is concise and includes addresses for ordering elusive supplies. The authors have broken from tradition by using photographs showing typical cases of skin disease, rather than the "worst case ever" pictures found in most dermatology texts. The patient education handouts are thorough, written in a style that is easy to understand, yet not insultingly simple.

The book has few drawbacks. Some of the photographs are poorly exposed and difficult to interpret. Dermatology is a visual art, and much like pictures of the Grand Canyon, photographs often do not do justice to skin lesions. The only other suggestion I would make for the authors is not really a criticism: the patient education handouts are so helpful, I wish they covered more topics.

Overall, this is an excellent book that I would recommend to anyone who is likely to diagnose and treat skin diseases. Nondermatologists will benefit from its clear and concise treatment of skin diagnosis and treatment, while many dermatologists would benefit from its patient-centered approach.

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