

Book Review

Pediatric Drug Companion. Authors: *Jitender Nagpal, Panna Choudhury, H.P.S. Sachdev.* New Delhi, Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers. First edition: 2003, 404 Pages, Rs. 175/-.

The knowledge regarding precise dosages of drugs is essential in children because margin of drug safety is low in infants and administration of medicines in low doses results into unsatisfactory response. There is no simple formula to calculate the doses of drugs for children. I felt the need of a comprehensive book on drug dosages in children during my residency. As a junior resident, it was difficult for me to prescribe even the common drugs in exact dosages. We did not find any such ready reference material during that time. Even today, it is not uncommon for a practicing pediatrician to refer to colleagues or text-books for quick confirmation for a drug under prescription, the dosage, toxicity, adjustment in renal disease or compatibility with pregnancy and lactation. This type of reference material for our set up was long overdue, although it is a common practice in the west for the doctors to carry a small book on prescribing information for ready reference since long. In this context, pediatric drug companion by Dr. Jitender Nagpal, Dr. Panna Choudhary and Dr. HPS Sachdev will fillup this void.

It comprises information regarding every drug in details with uniform presentation. The drugs are grouped in the various systems to which their primary use can be classified. With short introduction of every molecule, its indications and dosage are given in box

drawing the attention of the person immediately. Adverse effects, contra-indications and toxicity are other important aspects described with their practical importance. Pregnancy category of each drug is mentioned in details with recent information. It has been distinctly stated with reference to different studies in pregnant women and animal experiments. Lactation category is another distinguished feature of this book. This is important information for the pediatrician to know and it is hardly seen in other books. Sodium bicarbonate, Folinic acid, antithyroid drugs, Vitamin-D metabolites and antidotes of common toxic substances are not mentioned. It may be due to oversight. Inclusion of antiviral drugs available to us like interferon, ganciclovir, agents supplementing immunity like G-CSF, GM-CSF and specific immunoglobulins for tetanus, diphtheria, rabies *etc.* are essential components of such a ready reference book. It can be included in future editions.

Printing, quality of paper and reasonable price are other noteworthy features of this book.

This book is must in wards, intensive care units and on the desk of students as well as practitioners for immediate reference. In a long way, it will be useful to improve the quality of prescriptions in pediatric practice.

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