

zation as a global allergy nomenclature) and is included in the Introduction.

The document comprises 7 main chapters, each written by multiple experts, mostly from different parts of the world, which enhanced the provision of balanced information and recommendations. Each chapter ends with conclusions and relevant references.

The first chapter is on genetics and addresses atopic disease heritability, molecular regulation, susceptibility genes, and disease-modifying genes. The second chapter deals with environmental influences on asthma and allergy, including the effects of diet, infection, indoor and outdoor allergies, and exposure to air pollutants, with special details on tobacco smoke. The third chapter addresses early immunological influences, both antenatal and postnatal. The fourth chapter addresses prediction and early diagnosis by using family history, genetic markers, immunologic markers, clinical findings, and allergy testing. The fifth chapter deals with preventive measures through early interventions during infancy and measures specific for occupational allergies and asthma. The sixth chapter addresses allergy and asthma education, which is an important component of disease management. Examples of education programs for asthma, allergic rhinitis, and eczema are provided. The seventh chapter deals with a topic that is rarely addressed in textbooks, namely, the costs of allergy and asthma and the potential benefit of prevention strategies.

The text concludes with a chapter entitled "Summary and Guidelines," in which the editors summarize the key messages of the preceding chapters. For each of the 7 main chapters the editors wrote a concise paragraph on the current knowledge or guidelines and another paragraph on further actions required.

Complementing the document are 2 appendixes. Appendix 1 provides information on practical allergen-avoidance measures for house dust mite, pollen, pets, cockroach, and mold, as well as recommendations for patients with anaphylaxis. These instructions can be reproduced for patient education. Appendix 2 provides outlines in the contents of educational programs on allergic asthma, rhinitis, eczema, and anaphylaxis.

The contents, format, and authorship of **Prevention of Allergy and Allergic Asthma** make it a very timely addition to the medical library. The basic science content of the book is adequate and well-linked

to the relevant clinical aspects of the diseases. I wished the document included more figures, to illustrate certain information. Nevertheless, I found the contents well-organized and easily readable. The book has an exceptionally detailed table of contents and a comprehensive subject index.

Since allergic disorders affect 20–30% of people and asthma affects 5–15% of various populations, patients with such diseases are frequently encountered by general practitioners, pediatricians, internists, dermatologists, otolaryngologists, pulmonologists, and allergists/immunologists. In addition to these health-care providers, the book will be very valuable to preventive-medicine specialists, epidemiologists, health-care planners, and government officials.

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Asthma Information for Teens: Health Tips About Managing Asthma and Related Concerns. Karen Bellenir, editor. *Teen Health* series. Detroit: Omnigraphics. 2005. Hard cover, illustrated, 386 pages, \$58.

The issue of asthma management is a daunting enough task, but with teenagers the challenge is all the more complex. That is why it is important for teens to understand at their level the best line of attack by which to manage their asthma. As a father of 3 teenagers, I can appreciate the intricacies of imparting wisdom to teenagers (whether they like it or not). Teaching and reaching teenagers becomes all the more important when they have asthma. This text sets out to reach the teenage patient population and I believe it will achieve that goal.

The intended readers are teens in middle school and high school. The flow of the book is easy to follow and one does not get lost or distracted along the way. Most of the information presented is of short duration, with to-the-point messages that won't cause the reader to lose attention. The book is broken into the following logical sections: "Asthma Facts," "Diagnosing and Monitoring Asthma," "Medical Issues in Asthma Management," "Lifestyle Issues in Asthma Management," "Asthma Research," and "Resources for Additional Help and Information." The editor was correct in prefacing the book by stating that, while asthma cannot be cured, it can be successfully man-

aged with knowledge and proper care. If any take-home point should be made to teenagers, it is this one: *Asthma can be managed, but the patient must be actively engaged in making it happen.*

Part of this book that makes the reading interesting is the liberal allotment of "Tips" and "It's a Fact" sidebars, which offer information snippets that relate to the topic, but in a shorter and concise manner. Even for the adult reader this is much appreciated.

In the section on asthma facts the writer took great pains to detail the causes of asthma and how it is diagnosed. An entire chapter in this section is devoted to frequently asked questions, which are appropriately placed. Questions are asked and answered that would probably concern a teenager. For instance, one question asks, are asthma medicines addictive? Another asks, are inhaled steroids dangerous? All of these are answered in a straightforward, compassionate, and clear approach.

Interestingly, the book includes more than 6 pages about coughing, but has no substantial discussion about why cough is important, as it is a classic sign of uncontrolled asthma. This is especially true during the nighttime, but this is never mentioned in the book. In addition, there are mentions of certain drugs that cause cough, but the book does not specifically state what those drugs may be. I found this omission to be lacking.

I did find useful the section dedicated to dispelling the myths about exercise-induced asthma. It was well-referenced and discussed the subject with a personal touch in that it was told by former Olympian Joanna Zeiger, a world-class triathlete who has exercised-induced asthma. That personal perspective brings the information to life and helps the reader better relate to the topic. Role models are important to this age group.

The second section is focused on diagnosing and monitoring asthma, and I found the chapter "How to Find an Asthma Doctor Who Meets Your Needs" most useful. It provides many sensible and common-sense questions that must be asked when trying to find a physician who will adhere to the needs of the patient and family. Critical questions and due diligence recommendations are provided. These are considerations that adult readers can benefit from as well.

This text is up to date and even presents a discussion of the role of exhaled nitric oxide as a monitoring tool for the asthma inflammatory process, as well as information about the use of anti-immunoglobulin-E

therapy. By even mentioning these emerging technologies, the book made me realize that the editor sought to cover as much new information as possible. I also appreciated the level of "straight talk" that is presented. If a patient with asthma experiences a severe attack, proper steps must be taken or the person can die from asthma. This is stated more than once, and it is important to share the seriousness of the disease.

It would have been very useful to have a section dedicated to peer-pressure issues. It is important to understand ways to manage asthma without being conspicuous. In particular this would be important when it comes to taking medications or when displaying symptoms of uncontrolled asthma. I recall a friend of my daughter who was recently at our home with several other teens. Unfortunately, she stood out because she has severe persistent asthma. During the party she needed to hook up her nebulizer to take a rescue medication in the midst of the get-together. She ended up being the center of attention. How does a teen discretely manage asthma symptoms without standing out in the crowd? This issue should have been elaborated on. There could also have been photographs and color drawings. All of the text is in black-and-white and there are very few illustrations.

This is a unique text and could make an important contribution to the education of 13–19-year-olds, who have a wide variety of interests, peers, and perceived pressures. I would recommend it to all teens (or adults) who wish to learn more about asthma and the asthma issues facing this age group. It would even be useful for the respiratory therapist to read as well.

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Smoking Cessation 2nd edition. *Fast Facts* series. Robert West PhD and Saul Shiffman PhD. Oxford, United Kingdom: Health Press. 2004. Soft cover, illustrated, 78 pages, \$28.

The *Fast Facts* series of soft-cover books is designed to provide quick reviews of various medical conditions and treatments. This particular installment provides information on acute and chronic effects of smoking, smoking-cessation treatments, and the benefits and myths associated with smoking cessation. The target audience is broadly stated as all health-care professionals, and the information is provided in a clear and concise manner easily accessible to any health-care provider.

The book is short, 78 pages, with 8 chapters supplemented nicely with graphs and charts. The chapters include "Cigarettes as a Nicotine Delivery System," "Smoking Patterns," "Social, Psychological, and Economic Influences on Smoking," "Effects of Smoking and Smoking Cessation," "Cigarette Dependence," "The Clinician and Smoking," "Treatments to Aid Smoking Cessation," "Future Trends," and a section with useful addresses and resources.

Providing an international perspective on smoking cessation, the text is co-authored by 2 respected physicians from the United Kingdom and United States, who have over 20 and 30 years, respectively, in tobacco research. This international perspective is seen in the chapter "Smoking Patterns," which makes good use of graphs to show smoking patterns as high as 60–65% of men in Russia and China. The chapter "Social, Psychological, and Economic Influences" describes the economic impacts of tobacco-advertising bans and increased taxes on smoking, in both the United Kingdom and the United States.

Chapters 1, 4, and 5 describe cigarettes' ability to deliver nicotine and cause dependence, along with the consequences of smoking. In particular, I found the chapter "Cigarette Dependence" quite informative. This chapter simplifies the relatively complicated process, translating the technical aspect of nicotine's effect on the brain to its creation of tobacco dependence. There is effective use of graphs.

The importance of counseling is reviewed in the chapters "The Clinician and Smoking" and "Treatments to Aid Smoking Cessation." The authors correctly point out that all health-care providers should assist in

counseling for smoking cessation. As a respiratory therapist, I've always felt that our role is crucial in aiding smoking cessation. The book includes a simple algorithm that provides a nice visual decision tree for counseling choices. The pharmacologic and alternative aids to smoking cessation are described in easy-to-understand prose. There is correct emphasis on the importance of pharmacologic smoking-cessation aids and the consequent increase in cessation rates. The summary on nicotine-replacement products and bupropion is succinct yet complete.

The chapter "Future Trends" is only 3 pages long, but it provides a quick summary of cessation activities that are "on the horizon." The final section on resources will be helpful for those seeking more information.

One aspect of the book I found disconcerting was the lack of specific citations. As in other of the *Fast Facts* books, the authors provide a list of references at the end of each chapter. Some of the statements made in the text beg for further investigation. One case to this effect is in the chapter, "Social, Psychological, and Economic Influences"; the author states that, "In adulthood, there is a strong correlation between having a criminal conviction and being a smoker." While this may be true, I'm not sure all smokers would agree, and they would probably want to see the source of that information. Despite this personal preference for specific citation, I found the *Fast Facts* book format well organized and easy to read. Each chapter is color-coded for quick reference. I found the key points section at the end of each chapter quite beneficial.

I think the authors have nicely covered the topic in a brief, concise manner. The organization and content are good, and the information is current and topical. Allied health professionals will find this an excellent smoking-cessation resource.

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