

Palliative Care Formulary (5th edn)

Edited by Robert Twycross, Andrew Wilcock, Paul Howard

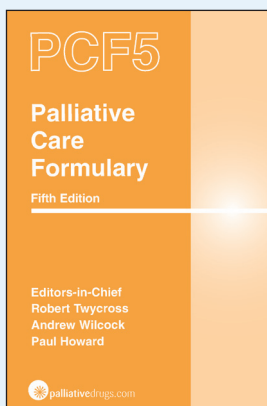
palliativedrugs.com 2014

Price £50.00. Pp 880

ISBN 978 0 9552547 9 6

It is hard to overemphasize the place of the *Palliative Care Formulary* in specialist palliative care practise. The comprehensive coverage of all pharmacological knowledge presented in such an accessible means it acts as a core drug formulary for clinicians and pharmacists.

The book is only part of it – online versions, downloadable PDFs and the freely accessible sections of palliativedrugs.com, including the bulletin board and policies



and procedures section, all make access to these resources a must for clinicians and pharmacists in the speciality. Through this means there is a continuous dialogue between editors and readers.

The 5th edition maintains the same layout broadly matching the *British National Formulary*. There are new sections with updates added as new developments have occurred.

Like those before, this edition combines practical information such as dosages, preparations and formulations, with detailed pharmacology and general guidance (e.g. syringe driver compatibility).

The *Palliative Care Formulary* recognizes that evidence is not always available and provides pragmatic guidance on use beyond licence.

Looking for improvements it is hard to find fault. More could be made of the clinical guides, how they are chosen or prioritized. But the formulary needs to be careful not become just another palliative medicine text book – this is not its purpose. A clearly identified emergencies section for quick reference would be helpful.

So if as a clinician you care for patients in a palliative phase of their illness this is a useful text to have in your office or on line to access remotely.

As the authors state it is impossible to be familiar with all pharmacology of medicines used in end stages of disease. This is where the *Palliative Care Formulary* comes into its own as a major accessible resource for prescribing clinicians involved in palliative care.

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Emergencies in Gastroenterology and Hepatology

Daniel Marks and Marcus Harbord

Oxford University Press 2013

Price £27.99. Pp 375

ISBN 978 0 19 923136 2

This book continues the series of handbooks, focusing on emergency management within different areas of medical practice.

It is clearly set out with chapters covering all the major emergency presentations within gastroenterology and hepatology, although it would have been beneficial to cover intravenous fluid management as this is an important aspect of managing patients in hospital. It is particularly useful to have a section on liver problems during pregnancy as these patients often induce fear in the attending physician.

The book is densely packed with information, making it more of a reference guide than a practical 'on the job' manual. There is a section of 24 colour images of pathology, largely endoscopic, but it would have been helpful to have more images and colour diagrams throughout the text to ease reading.

It is always difficult in a publication of this nature to be entirely up to date, but some management strategies have changed, for example the authors suggest use of sulphasalazine for mild ulcerative colitis rather than newer 5-aminosalicylic acids

and low protein nutritional support for acute liver failure (p. 240). It would also be useful to mention thiopurine metabolite testing in inflammatory bowel disease, along with suggested algorithms, as this is likely to be a common future strategy.

This is a helpful reference guide. It would be particularly useful for registrars who are keen to broaden their understanding of gastroenterology in bite-sized chunks.

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Rapid Review of Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Disorders

Jessica J Manson, Sharon A Chambers,

David A Isenberg, Joan T Merrill,

Michael E Shipley

CRC Press 2014

Price £29.95. Pp 168.

ISBN 978 1 84076 094 1

This book has three chapters and two appendices. Chapter one explains how to conduct a musculoskeletal examination that is tailored to an individual patient. Chapter two describes the ten most common conditions that will be encountered by a rheumatologist or GP. The clinical features and investigations are reviewed for each condition, the text is supplemented by tables, special points and colour pictures that help the reader understand the salient and important points. The third chapter

consists of a hundred clinical cases with colour pictures. After the presentation of each case, a series of questions and answers then follows. Appendix one provides an overview of the clinical use of autoantibody tests. Appendix two provides information on the huge progress that has been made with the pharmacological treatment of inflammatory arthritis and the autoimmune rheumatic diseases. The dose of drugs, their indication, route of administration, required monitoring and common adverse effects are summarized.

Five authors have contributed to this book, they have a wealth of valuable clinical experience gathered over years of distinguished clinical practice. This practical knowledge has been transferred to this book and is presented in a format that will help the reader to recognize, investigate and manage patients who present with musculoskeletal manifestations of a diverse range of conditions from those who present in primary care to those who are acutely unwell with more complex and challenging problems who attend accident and emergency. This book will be invaluable to GPs, allied health professionals, medical students, rheumatology trainees, and secondary care physicians and teams, especially those who cover acute general medicine.

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