

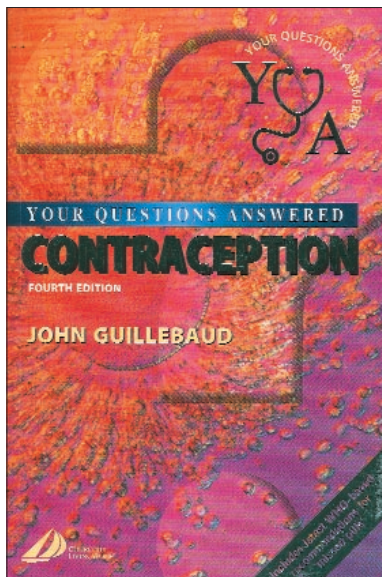
Contraception: Your Questions Answered (4th edn)

John Guillebaud
Churchill Livingstone 2004
Price £24.99. Pp 582
ISBN 0443073430

Aimed at GPs, family planning doctors and nurses providing contraceptive care, this extensive text is now in its fourth edition. The book retains its question and answer format and ends each chapter with easy to understand answers to frequently asked patient questions.

The indexing system for each chapter makes it easier to navigate the book so that users can focus quickly on the area in which they are seeking guidance. The use of icons to highlight important related information is also useful in guiding readers to relevant text more easily. The text format lends itself to use by clinicians who are not experts in family planning.

The style is highly personalized and the advice given is



based on personal opinion as much as evidence. Although the book provides very useful information on clinical management of many contraceptive issues and problems, it is concerning to note that on occasion it ignores or rejects national and international expert opinion on contraceptive clinical practice, especially in contentious areas such as the effect on body weight on efficacy of progestogen-only contraception, the safety and duration of use of Depo Provera, and the frequency of intrauterine device (IUD) follow up, to mention just a few.

Such opinions from a popular and respected author may have a less than desirable effect on clinical practice, especially among generalist contraception providers who may not access other evidence-based national and international publications.

Meera Kishen, Consultant in Family Planning and Reproductive Health, Liverpool

Medical Ethics and the Elderly (2nd edn)

Gurcharan Rai
Radcliffe Medical Press 2004
Price £19.95. Pp 163
ISBN 185775851X

The majority of junior doctors deal with elderly patients on a daily basis, often in a setting where they are alone on the wards with a long list of jobs and the prospect of lunch fading into the distance. In the midst of this madness ethical dilemmas often arise which must be solved rapidly and correctly by a junior doctor. Common examples include taking Doris' blood when she is confused but keeps pulling her arm away or consenting Terence for a chest drain when he cannot recall where he is.

This book seeks to educate the junior doctor on the medicolegal background of these decisions and empower him/her to deal with dilemmas in a logical and ethical manner. The approach is very practical, including the surprisingly basic but common decisions about patients' care. Topics covered include consent, resuscitation orders, withdrawing nutrition and dementia. There is even a section on driving assessment in the elderly.

Each chapter reviews the current law (a rapidly developing field including areas such as the Human Rights Act), considers several relevant viewpoints, e.g. public health, religion, scientific background, and applies these to a number of case studies. It is easy to find relevant information within the concise chapters, along with clear practical advice.

This is a well written and carefully thought-out book that would be a worthwhile read for all junior doctors, but especially those in a health care of the elderly placement. No self-respecting hospital library should be without it.

Stephan Sanders, Derby Royal Infirmary, Derby

Case Studies in Diabetes

Edited by D John Betteridge
Martin Dunitz 2003
Price £35.00. Pp 212
ISBN 1841840327

The author of this book is an authority on the management of lipids and diabetes. He has an international reputation as a great speaker with the ability to captivate and entertain while providing information to the audience. These assets are reflected in this book.

Forty two cases are presented from diabetes units around the world. The cases start with the management of type 1 diabetes and subsequently cover psychological management, type 2 diabetes, the management of lipids and complications of diabetes. All cases include a commentary and learning points.

While some cases are very concise others have a tendency to ramble. The content and applicability of the commentaries do vary and while a large number of references are included this book does not include guidelines on management and is not a substitute for a textbook. For those who are looking for specific information this may be frustrating.

Overall I found this book easy to read, entertaining and thought provoking. Certainly for those in training it is worth reading and is one to borrow from the library. The short chapters would accommodate study during quiet or rest periods. For others it will have to find its place alongside the numerous other books available. I would certainly recommend glancing at this on the bookshop shelves and considering coughing up.

Steven Hurel, University College Hospital, London