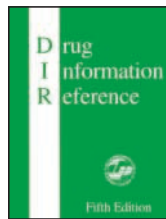


## Drug information reference, 5th ed.

Barbara J. Cadario, Anne M. Leatham, editors



Vancouver: BC Drug and Poison Information Centre; 2003. 1445 pp; \$65 (paper) ISBN 0-9699644-2-0

**Rating:** \*\*\*

**Audience:** Health professionals

**Content:** Cadario and Leatham have developed a practical guide to frequently used prescription and nonprescription medications available in Canada, as well as to some herbal preparations. Many drug information handbooks tend to be overly inclusive in describing drug characteristics, adverse effects and interactions, making comparisons between individual agents within a therapeutic class difficult. Like most drug references, this text is organized as a collection of evidence-based monographs of individual drugs, but this approach is balanced with a “user-friendly” series of general monographs comparing agents within a therapeutic class.

**Strengths:** The clarity of presentation and the scope of practical information are excellent. Entries are organized alphabetically by generic drug name and are described in a concise and consistent format. The drug information needs of the spectrum of health professionals are anticipated in each monograph. For each agent, tables list potential drug interactions and the nature, mechanism and relevance of these interactions. Monographs also include sections on use in special populations, nursing implications for patient monitoring and patient instructions. A great deal of repetition is eliminated by the editors’ organization of the monographs by generic rather than proprietary name. The index adequately

cross-references Canadian (but not US) proprietary and generic names with the drug monographs.

**Limitations:** Although the general monographs comparing agents within a therapeutic class are a unique and valuable aspect of this text, the scope of each class appears arbitrary. For example, the general monograph for antipsychotics overviews both the older typical and the newer atypical agents, whereas for antidepressant agents the class comparison is limited to SSRIs only. This is not an exhaustive index of all drugs available in Canada; while most new agents are represented, many older drugs are absent. The text is a valuable supplement to, but not a replacement for, the *Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties*.

### Jim Owen

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For information on how to obtain a copy of this book, please contact the BC Drug and Poison Information Centre at [dpic@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:dpic@vcn.bc.ca)

## Epidemiology for the uninitiated, 5th ed.

D. Coggon, Geoffery Rose, D.J.P. Barker



London: BMJ Publishing Group; 2003. 68 pp plus index, graphs and tables. \$27.50 (paper) ISBN 0-7279-1604-1

**Rating:** \*\*\*

**Audience:** Physicians

**Content:** As the title indicates, this very slim book offers the reader a brief initiation to the field of epidemiology and biostatistics. It also includes a short account of research methods and screening. The text is very short and as such does not go

into any subject in much depth. It is meant clearly to be an introduction to clinicians with little previous instruction in statistics and epidemiology.

**Strengths:** The book’s very brevity is its chief strength. The language is clear and the writing concise. Complex concepts are well and briefly presented. The organization of both the contents and index makes it easy to find specific topics.

**Limitations:** Brevity is also this book’s main limitation. Not all major topics are covered; for example, the evidence-based approach for clinicians is hardly touched upon.

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This book is available through your local book retailer or through the publisher at [www.bmjprod.com/template.cfm?name=bnjprod\\_bks](http://www.bmjprod.com/template.cfm?name=bnjprod_bks)

## BOOKS RECEIVED

Hopkins B, Johnson SP, editors. **Neurobiology of infant vision.** Westport (CT): Praeger Publishers; 2003. 300 pp. US\$67.95 ISBN 1-56750-691-7

Stewart R. **The mind of Norman Bethune.** Markham (ON): Fitzhenry and Whiteside; 2002. 230 pp. \$30.75 ISBN 1-55041-601-4

Weinberg DB. **Codegreen: money-driven hospitals and the dismantling of nursing.** Ithica (NY): Cornell University Press; 2003. 213 pp. US\$25 ISBN 0-8014-3980-9

Westermeyer JJ, Weiss RD, Ziedonis DM. **Integrated treatment for mood and substance use disorders.** Baltimore (MD): Johns Hopkins University Press; 2003. 199 pp. US\$39.95 ISBN 0-8018-7199-9

Items reviewed are rated on a 4-star scale (4 = excellent)