



Canada and is highly recommended for family physicians, pediatricians, obstetricians and gynecologists and other health care professionals who care for children and adolescents with HIV infection. The authors are members of the National Working Group on Comprehensive Care for Persons with HIV Disease, and they have considerable collective experience and expertise in dealing with this disease.

The guide is complete, concise, clear, easy to read and user friendly. It details precisely the medical, ethical and social issues involved in the care of affected infants, children and adolescents. The algorithms for the investigation of fever and cough are particularly good, and the table for treatment and prophylaxis of opportunistic infections is complete and easy to follow. The module also includes excellent chapters on issues surrounding reproduction, nutritional management and palliative care. Most important, there is a complete list of agencies and pediatric HIV treatment centres where additional assistance in management can be sought.

The only drawback to this reference is that, since it was published, new antiretroviral agents have been licensed in Canada and improvements in polymerase-chain-reaction technology have meant that HIV viral-load measurements are becoming an important consideration in therapeutic decisions. No textbook can ever be completely up to date, owing to the rapid changes in HIV management. This reference is one of the best now available.

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CD-ROM

**Child Care
A Comprehensive Medical
Resource to Promote the
Physical, Emotional and Social
Well-Being of Children**

Corel Medical Series. Corel Corporation, Ottawa. 1996. \$66.

Overall rating:	Good
Strengths:	Well written, easy to understand, free of jargon and well organized, with good search features
Weaknesses:	Fails to give specific directions for some therapies; requires a very fast computer
Audience:	Child-care centre directors and caregivers, instructors and students in early childhood education, family physicians, pediatricians and public health professionals
System requirements:	66-MHz 486 IBM-compatible personal computer, 8 MB RAM, double-speed CD-ROM drive

This CD-ROM is essentially geared toward caregivers in child-care centres. It provides comprehensive, well-written guidelines on almost every aspect of child care in these centres, where it would be a worthwhile resource.

The computer requirements, however, are fairly high; although the manufacturer recommends the use of a 486, I found that the CD-ROM was noticeably sluggish even on a 75-MHz Pentium system, although it ran well on a 120-MHz Pentium computer. I am not sure that most child-care centres would have this type of equipment available.

The CD-ROM, produced by a Canadian company, is easy to use and well presented. The initial screen contains links to the main topics as well as an index and a search command. Each topic is subdivided into different sections. Most users should be able to start using this CD-ROM

with no or only minimal explanation.

Because the text is geared to lay readers, it is written clearly and is free of jargon. It is especially strong when discussing disease prevention in child-care centres; it explains clearly and concisely how and why diseases are spread. The CD-ROM gives guidelines for the timing of a child's return to the care centre after most common illnesses and repeatedly advocates frequent hand washing by the caregivers. If these measures were rigorously adhered to, they would certainly decrease the incidence of the most common illnesses in child-care centres. Most of the guidelines have been approved by the Canadian Paediatric Society, which was associated with the production of the CD-ROM.

There is a useful section containing hand-outs for parents, which cover some common childhood problems (such as those involving diapering and sleeping) and illnesses. These can be printed and photocopied. The information provided is accurate and provides good descriptions of the problems along with suggestions concerning treatment and when to contact a physician.

Other sections deal with child safety and emotional well-being as well as issues related to the staff of a child-care centre (such as training and record-keeping) and to the centre's physical environment. The information provided seems to be comprehensive.

I do not intend to use this CD-ROM in my office because the information is not detailed enough for a medical practice. I would, however, recommend it to any parent who is considering placing his or her child in a child-care centre, as a guide to what superb child care entails. I plan to donate this CD-ROM to a local public school, to be used in the child-care centre sharing the school building and in the parent resource centre.

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