

Book review

Handbook of Drugs for Tropical Parasitic Infections

L. L. Gustafsson, B. Beerman, Y. A. Abdi. Taylor & Francis, London, 1987.
Hardback £24.00, paperback £11.00.

This Handbook covers the chemotherapy of specific tropical parasitic diseases. The management of ectoparasites such as *Sarcoptes* and *Pediculus* are not covered, although they may occur in the tropics as well as in temperate zones.

The main part of the Handbook consists of a series of short, concise and informative summaries of the various chemotherapeutic agents, which are arranged in alphabetical order. This works well, although antimony compounds do appear in three places — under Antimony (trivalent), Meglumine Antimony, and also as Sodium Antimony Gluconate. However, there is a good index so locating the drug required is not a problem.

The choice of drug for any given infestation is aided by two tables at the beginning of the book, where conditions are classified under Sporozoal and Helminthic infections, and recommendations given as to the most suitable drugs for use, together with brief comments on any special circumstances surrounding their use. These tables allow one to refer easily to the appropriate section in the main part of the Handbook.

Each drug is concisely and clearly described under a number of standard sub-headings, covering structure, physical properties, pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, clinical trials, clinical indications for use, contra-indications, side-effects and dosage. Each summary ends with a note on the preparations available, and the name of the supplier, plus a number of references for those requiring further detailed information on the drug. The note on preparations and supplier is of particular value in the tropics, where many drugs are not easily available: perhaps in the next edition there may also be an index giving the address of suppliers listed, as not all of them have agencies in every tropical area where this Handbook will be used.

This is an excellent and valuable book, which should certainly be readily available in clinics where parasitic diseases may be treated. Reference to its contents is quick and easy, and the information given will enable the clinician to offer safe and effective treatment to his patients. At £11.00 for the paperback edition it represents very good value for money for a valuable 'working' text.

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