

Preface

Infectious diseases and immunodeficiencies remain the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the world's children today (World Health Organization [WHO], 2006). The WHO estimates that nearly one third of the global deaths in 2005 were attributable to communicable diseases, an acknowledged underestimate. Despite the optimism engendered by the development of antimicrobial therapy and vaccines, and improvements in sanitation—especially in developed countries—infections both prevail (e.g., malaria) and emerge (e.g., human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). Infectious diseases respect neither geographic nor medical specialty boundaries.

Pediatricians and all who care for children are faced virtually on a daily basis with classic and unusual presentations of infectious diseases and immunodeficiencies in their patients. The neurological consequences of infectious diseases and immunodeficiency syndromes have, however, not been previously compiled in a readily accessible volume.

Our goal is to provide a succinct authoritative, up-to-date, evidence-based, practical, and accessible reference. This book is written for physicians-in-training, primary care physicians, and subspecialists. We aim to alert practitioners to the neurological manifestations of infectious disease entities and, conversely, to alert physicians who encounter a neurological process to the possibility of an underlying infectious disease or immunodeficiency syndrome.

All chapters provide a general description of the disease or disorder, its epidemiology, etiology, clinical synopsis, neurological manifestations, diagnosis, differential diagnosis, and therapy. We have endeavored to enhance the volume's usefulness by maintaining a structured format, at the same time offering refreshing and diverse expositions by an international group of authors. Although we attempted to minimize duplication, some repetition was unavoidable.

The editors are grateful to these expert contributors, to our teachers and to our mentors, and to the many individuals who helped bring this text to fruition.

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