
Preface

Eight years ago, we decided to write a web-based handbook on adolescent medicine for the pediatric and medical residents at Massachusetts General Hospital as well as the Harvard Medical students who rotated through our service. Our decision was based in part on the numerous queries we received about adolescent medicine topics from the house staff. Subsequently the first edition of this handbook was printed, and it has been very well received nationally and internationally.

For the second edition, we have added new chapters as well as reviewed, revised, and updated the handbook and increased our contributors from 18 in the first edition to 33 in this edition. Our new chapters include an entry on hypertension in adolescents written by a pediatric nephrologist. In addition, a separate chapter on immunizations was developed, as there have been a number of changes in vaccine recommendations over the past several years. Members of the surgical service have authored a new chapter to review breast disorders. Because of increasing use of pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis medications for HIV, an infectious disease expert at Massachusetts General Hospital has written a new chapter on HIV in adolescents. Our final new chapter for this edition covers resilience and disease in adolescents, authored by the editor.

The handbook has three parts: general adolescent medicine, sexuality, and mental health. There is also an appendix with additional materials. References and additional readings are listed at the end of each chapter, and Web sites are interspersed among the content. Knowing that mental health and substance abuse competencies are goals recommended by the American Academy of

Pediatrics for primary care pediatricians, we have included an extensive section on each of these areas of learning. In addition, adolescents surface in the medical home asking for sexuality services, so we have included broad content for these important issues. We have made every effort to include practical materials useful for the primary care clinician realizing that these core areas of learning may not be addressed extensively in pediatric or internal medicine training programs.

Each of our outstanding authors represents expertise in pediatric or adult specialties. All authors have been trained at or are members of the staff of Massachusetts General Hospital. Except for neonatologists and geriatricians, any other medical or surgical specialist may see adolescents. While this handbook is aimed at clinicians who see a number of adolescents in their practices, it should be relevant to most clinicians.

Finally, to keep this edition a reasonable size, we have not intended that this handbook be a complete survey of all adolescent medicine topics. Rather, we have selected the content that we hope is relevant, practical, and user-friendly and cover those areas most often seen in the practice of adolescent medicine. We also have endeavored to develop a resource that addresses best practices in adolescent medicine where practice not only means the most appropriate approaches, diagnostic evaluations, and best treatments, but also the best ways to connect, communicate, and continue care with teenagers. After all, if the physician cannot develop a good relationship with an adolescent, the treatment and follow through will surely be compromised.

Boston, MA, USA
November 2016

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The MassGeneral Hospital for Children Adolescent
Medicine Handbook

Goldstein, M.A. (Ed.)

2017, XVIII, 381 p. 37 illus., 33 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-45777-2