
Preface

This book is important. It is important not only because some of the world's leading authorities have summarized the evidence on each of these topics but also important because we live in a world where illness and infection are often perceived to be due to bacteria. This has led to an enormous increase in antibiotic use and, of course, the attendant increases in antimicrobial resistance. We need to know, and make our colleagues aware, of the enormous burden of viral infections in children, for which conventional antibiotics are redundant and unnecessary and even harmful. Knowing the burden may now save our world from the looming threat of “superbugs”. We do of course need to work on dealing with the additional threat from viruses and much research and effective therapy is still needed. Hopefully some of us reading this book will be inspired to provide these outcomes.

This book attempts to summarize the known literature on each of the organ systems where viruses may cause disease. In addition, there are chapters on viral illnesses where the organisms produce more profound systemic pathologies. Since this book is inclusive, I have added a chapter on HIV and the problems caused specifically by the virus itself and another on the comorbid illnesses seen due to compromised immunity.

Each of the chapters contains the latest information on the pathobiology of viral infections, the clinical presentation and diagnostic pointers as well as management strategies. In this sense, the book should appeal to both non-clinicians and clinical specialists alike. I am particularly hoping that young doctors will find the book valuable in treating patients, because after all this should be our mandate—helping children in distress.

One word of explanation. Those of you who read the whole book may notice that some conditions and concepts are repeated in different chapters. This is for a number of reasons including emphasis on a different aspect of the disease, that repeating a certain topic may be required in order to introduce other concepts in that chapter, that the disease is common or currently making headlines and because the book is available on-line and some readers may elect to “pick-up” only selected chapters.

Enjoy the read!

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