Catheter-Related Infections, 2nd Edition
Edited by Harald Seifert, Bernd Jansen, and Barry M. Farr

New York: Marcel Dekker, 2005. 627 pp., illustrated. $199.95 (cloth).

Catheter-related infections are an unfortunate result of modern medical practice, with significant attributable costs, prolonged hospital stays, morbidity, and mortality. This comprehensive, multiauthored text provides a thorough overview of the epidemiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, management, and prevention of these infections, giving balanced perspectives on the complexities and controversies inherent in the field.

The book is divided into sections that address the basic principles of infections associated with intravascular catheters, infections due to specific pathogens, and infections associated with specific catheter types. The text is clear and readable, with helpful figures and tables. The documentation is extensive and as current as can be expected, with references as recent as 2003.

Coagulase-negative staphylococci are the quintessential pathogens that cause catheter-related infections, and the initial chapters on the basic principles of intravascular catheter-related infections and on staphylococcal infections form the core of the book. Close attention is paid to the biology of staphylococcus-catheter-host interactions, to the challenge of providing definitions of catheter-related infections useful to both clinicians and researchers, and to the role of quantitative and qualitative microbiologic techniques in support of clinical diagnosis of catheter-related infection. Reasonable algorithms are proposed for management, with an emphasis on the indications for catheter removal. The authors highlight the importance of antisepsis and maximal barrier precautions for central-venous catheter placement.

An ongoing controversy has been the appropriate use of catheters coated or impregnated with antimicrobial agents. Uncertainties about the choice of agents, concerns about drug resistance, considerations of study methodology, and issues of cost have led to various interpretations of the available comparative trials and varying implementation in clinical practice. Additional placebo-controlled trials are underway. In the chapters on the epidemiology and prevention of catheter-related infection, the authors present an even-handed analysis of antimicrobial catheters, ultimately endorsing their use in situations where the impact of catheter-related infection remains unacceptably high after other interventions.

The sections of the book that deal with infections caused by nonstaphylococcal organisms, such as fungi and gram-negative rods, are thorough and to the point. The authors appropriately pay attention to specific concerns about pathogenesis and management, not just to lists of recommended antibiotic regimens. The sections on particular types of intravascular catheters are very helpful, emphasizing the distinctive anatomic and pathologic considerations for use of peripheral venous catheters; central venous catheters, including the now ubiquitous peripherally inserted central catheter lines; pulmonary artery catheters; and arterial catheters. Special considerations related to pediatric patients are highlighted in a separate chapter.

The only quibbles I have with this excellent text are editorial and thematic. Perhaps unavoidably in a multiauthored book such as this, there is a fair amount of redundancy. For example, similar discussions about the epidemiology of catheter-related infections occur in chapters 1, 5, 6, 7, and 11. In addition, the chapters on CNS implants, peritoneal dialysis-related infections, and urinary catheter–associated infections—although well done—feel out of place in a book focused on intravascular devices. There are excellent books devoted to each of those topics.

These concerns are minor. This book will be useful to clinicians, infection-control practitioners, and researchers confronting the problem of catheter-related infections.

Acknowledgments

Potential conflicts of interest. R.K.: no conflicts.

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Biological Weapons Defense: Infectious Diseases and Counterbioterrorism
Edited by L. E. Lindler, F. J. Lebeda, and G. W. Korch

This book presents a formidable compilation of research data that was generated over several decades by the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) and other biowarfare and bioterrorism researchers. The editors and contributing authors are highly qualified. More than half of the contributors work within the United States Department of Defense, in particular the USAMRIID and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Other con-
and issues relating to decontamination. In utility of nonspecific immunomodulators, against specific agents, the therapeutic logical agents, antimicrobial drugs useful effects, pathogenesis of aerosolized bio-

cations. In part I, the chapters review bio-

lished as recently as 2003 and include nu-

classic articles of the 1940s to articles pub-

erences reviewed in the book range from 

knowledge by experts in their fields, much 

maries and reviews of research data and 

on its own as an independent treatise on 

is tightly written, well edited, and stands 

readily available handbooks and reference 

s, this is not a how-to handbook inten-

ted for quick consultations in typical 

clinical or emergency situations. This 

book serves primarily as a knowledge base 

bioterrorism-related issues and is pre-

sented at a much higher education level 

and in much more detail than can be 

found in many other commonly used re-

sources, such as the CDC’s bioterrorism 

Web site (http://www.bt.cdc.gov/). As 

such, this book would serve well as a grad-

uate-level textbook or as a detailed intro-

duction to the field and reference work for 

physicians, clinical and research labora-

tory personnel, public health workers, and 

even hospital and public health adminis-

trators whose duties include bioterrorism- 

response planning. Most readers who are 

reasonably well versed in infectious dis-

dases, epidemiology, or microbial genetics 

will be able to read and understand its 

content with little to moderate difficulty. 

Biological Weapons Defense is organized 

as a series of monographs. Each chapter is 
	ightly written, well edited, and stands 

on its own as an independent treatise on 

its subject. The reader will encounter sum-

maries and reviews of research data and 

knowledge by experts in their fields, much 

of which was previously unpublished or 

very difficult to find in usable form. Refe-

ences reviewed in the book range from 

classic articles of the 1940s to articles pub-

lished as recently as 2003 and include nu-

umerous foreign-language publications. 

The chapters are grouped into 4 sec-

tions. In part I, the chapters review bio-

logical event modeling, dose-response 
effects, pathogenesis of aerosolized bio-

logical agents, antimicrobial drugs useful 

against specific agents, the therapeutic 

utility of nonspecific immunomodulators, 

and issues relating to decontamination. In 

part II, focused chapters are devoted to 

reviewing the pathogenesis, animal re-

search data, clinical manifestations, diag-

nostic tests, treatment, disinfection, pre-

vention (including vaccine development), 

and genomic studies (including discussion 

of the potential for the bioengineering of 

more-virulent strains) of the predominant 

bioterrorism agents, including the agents 

of anthrax, smallpox, plague, brucellosis, 

Q fever, glanders, filoviruses, and protein 
toxins. In part III, the chapters review 

emerging and possible new biological 

weapons, the Global Epidemiology and 

Infections System (GEIS) program of the 

US Department of Defense, and the vari-

ous medical, microbiologic, and genetic 
databases of use in biodefense develop-

ment. A sequence of chapters deals with 

genomic studies of biowarfare agents and 

discusses how these studies may be applied 

to the development of novel vaccines and 

antimicrobials against high-risk organ-

isms, with Francisella tularensis and Ver-
sinia pestis used as examples. Part IV ad-

dresses the requirements for effective and 
timely identification systems for biological 

threats, including the need for rapid di-

agnostic kits usable in point-of-care situ-

ations, and it critiques existing systems, 
such as the CDC’s Laboratory Response 

Network for Bioterrorism. Other chapters 

review the current status and future de-

velopment of DNA-based and immuno-

logic detection assays. 

The book comes with a complementary 

CD-ROM attached to the inside rear 

cover. The book cover suggests that the 

CD-ROM is essentially an electronic ver-

sion of the book, which could be loaded 

onto laptop computers or personal digital 

assistants for quick reference. The user 

must complete an online registration 


Arkansas Medical University, North Little Rock, AR. 

For the purpose of this review, I received a 

serial number that I was unable to use. 

My overall impression of Biological 

Weapons Defense is that it narrows a large 

and critically important knowledge gap 

between the insiders of defense research 

facilities and the end users of information, 
such as civilian health departments, hos-

pital administrators, physicians, and 

emergency responders. In their statements 

in the Preface, the editors indicate that this 

book was intended to freely distribute re-

search data and knowledge to the world, 
to raise the veil of secrecy that has sur-

rounded research in these fields, and to 
increase awareness among the scientific 

and medical communities about what is 

known and what is yet to be understood. 

This book appears to have successfully 

achieved their intended goals. 

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AIDS and Other Manifestations of HIV Infection, 4th Edition

Edited by Gary P. Wormser


This textbook is one of only a few refer-
ence works on HIV infection that has a 

broad focus on both the basic science and 

the clinical aspects of this disease. The pri-

mary challenge for any textbook on HIV 

infection is to be an accurate reference in 

the face of one of the most rapidly chang-

ing fields of medicine. This is particularly 

true with antiretroviral therapy, for which 

many new agents have become available 

over the last few years and the approach 
to treatment is continuously evolving.