transmission. Another downside for individuals will be the cost, as each country or disease “e-book” costs $49. This is a modest price for the richness of the data, but given the number of countries and diseases, this means that most individuals will not be able to afford the entire set.

Because these are electronic books, some of the specific issues I have mentioned can be easily remedied, and these e-books can and should improve over time. Despite some shortcomings in the current product, Steve Berger and his team deserve kudos for a remarkable feat in the face of a daunting challenge.

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References


Public Health and Infectious Diseases

Edited by Jeffrey Griffiths, James H. Maguire, Kristian Heggenhougen, Stella R. Quah, and Davidson H. Hamer


Public Health and Infectious Diseases is a biomedical textbook that provides a combined clinical and public health perspective on infectious diseases of major public health importance, with the exception of human immunodeficiency virus infection and Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection (which the editors surmise is well covered elsewhere). The book focuses on neglected and emerging pathogens, with emphasis on those of public health importance in low-income countries, which the editors believe have received less attention from the biomedical community in recent years. The book provides concise information on a spectrum of these infectious diseases, bridging clinical knowledge, disease epidemiology, and prevention, treatment, and control measures. The chapters are written and edited by well-regarded experts in clinical and public health aspects of infectious diseases who represent a broad range of developed and developing regions worldwide. Students in public health, biomedical professionals, clinicians, public health practitioners, and decision makers all would find in this book information relevant to the control and prevention of neglected and emerging diseases worldwide.

The book is divided into 4 sections: overview and syndromes, bacteria and rickettsia, parasites, and viruses. The syndrome chapters are a comprehensive overview of bacterial infections, general childhood infectious diseases, foodborne illnesses, waterborne diseases, viral hepatitis, and pneumonia. In each of the chapters, the authors present a top-down perspective of pathogens and syndromes related to infectious diseases responsible for some of the highest burden of illness in developing countries. These chapters outline in broad terms the epidemiology, etiology, pathophysiology, and treatment and control options for reducing the toll of these diseases.

The subsequent sections are pathogen specific, focusing on diseases caused by bacteria, rickettsia, parasites, and viruses. These chapters comprehensively present the clinical and public health spectrum of diseases related to these pathogens, addressing illnesses common to the developing world. These chapters are well balanced in terms of information necessary for understanding the taxonomy and the microbiology as well as the clinical manifestations, diagnostics, and management. Most important from the public health perspective is that each chapter places substantial emphasis on the epidemiology of the disease, in terms of transmission and incidence, and provides an overview of measures necessary for disease prevention and control. Each chapter is accompanied by a relevant and manageable set of key references.

The book perhaps is a great starting point not only for those new to the field or those with interests overlapping this field (eg, policy makers, nongovernmental organization workers, or donors) but also for those specialized in other biomedical fields who intend to boost or to broaden their knowledge of infectious diseases and of the relevance of such diseases to the developing world. Notably absent is a chapter on rotavirus, which is the primary preventable cause of severe childhood diarrhoea worldwide, responsible for more than half a million childhood deaths annually. Future editions should address this oversight. All things considered, the book is a welcome addition to the field of infectious diseases, further bridging the gap between the clinician and the epidemiologist.

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