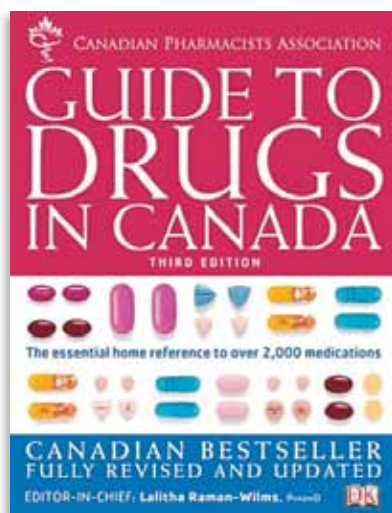


Canadian Pharmacists Association guide to drugs in Canada

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5 consists of a glossary of drug-related terms.

The A-to-Z section is particularly well organized. It systematically covers how to take the drug, dietary advice to follow, where the drug should be stored, etc. It also provides information on only the more pertinent adverse effects and notes if they are common or rare and whether or not any action needs to be taken. Note that the list of side effects is quite a bit shorter than you will find in the *Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties*, also put out by the Canadian Pharmacists Association, and most patient drug-information leaflets. A Special Precautions section covers considerations for pregnancy, age, driving, hazardous work, and alcohol use.

The book provides only a limited feel for the balance of benefits and risks the patient might receive from a given drug therapy; however, it is a high-quality drug reference source for the “overachiever” type of patient. If patients are going to be reading about their diseases and related drugs, it would be beneficial for them to find a quality book like this rather than a less trustworthy Internet or “testimonial” source.

—Loren Regier

Mr Regier is a pharmacist and Program Coordinator for the RxFiles Academic Detailing Program in Saskatoon, Sask.

The fifteen minute hour

Therapeutic talk in primary care

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PUBLISHED 2008/196 pp/\$34.50

OVERALL RATING Very good

STRENGTHS Excellent vignettes; short how-to methodology; easy reading style; interesting and practical

WEAKNESSES A little dry at times; could benefit from up-to-date website addresses

AUDIENCE Family physicians, primary care practitioners

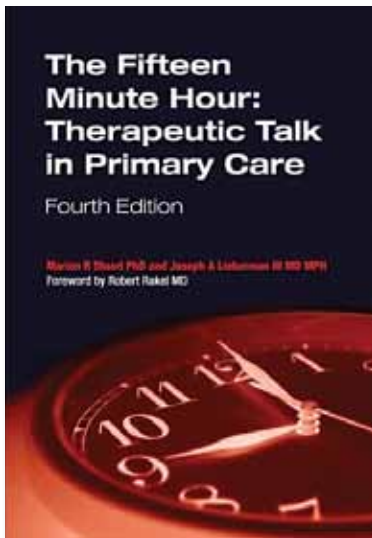
If you could take an immense amount of complex drug information and send it through a filter that preserved the essence of high-quality patient-oriented information, you could well end up with this book. It has just enough detail to be useful without getting lost in “too much information.” However, the book is somewhat limited in reflecting more recent evidence and the changes in prescribing trends.

The book is divided into 5 parts: Part 1 provides an introduction to understanding and using drugs. Part 2 provides a drug index. Part 3 discusses critical drug groups by system and includes helpful illustrations. Part 4 provides specific drug information (1 page per drug) in an A-to-Z format, including quick reference ratings. Part

A few weeks ago, I had great time fishing for largemouth bass with my friend Peter Bathe. This morning I enjoyed a good hot bath.

The authors of this book encourage family physicians to BATHE their patients as well. The BATHE technique is an excellent screening method for anxiety, stress, and depression. It enables the physician to identify and deal with these issues in 1 to 2 minutes during the patient interview. Both patients and physicians are reported to have enhanced satisfaction as a result.

The original concept of BATHE, which comprises the questions physicians should ask their patients, stands for the following: Background (What is going



on your life?); Affect (How do you feel about that?); Trouble (What troubles you the most?); Handling (How are you handling that?); and Empathy (That must be very difficult for you).

In this updated edition, the authors have added a chapter on positive psychology.

The writing style is easy to read, with short chapters, multiple vignettes, and scientific evidence to support the book's concepts.

I practise family medicine half the time and cognitive psychotherapy for the other half, and I have recently introduced the BATHE method into my family practice encounters. Patients really enjoy it when I ask about their week (whether good or bad) and their lives. I have discovered things about them I would not otherwise know, and it is more fun for me.

There is an excellent chapter dedicated to special issues—challenging patients, grief, suicide, and teenagers. We are reminded that “you don't own the problem, the patient does.” This book is a classic in the family physician literature.

—Frank Foley MD

Dr Foley is a family physician practising in Toronto, Ont.

Fast facts: breast cancer

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WEBSITE www.healthpress.co.uk

PUBLISHED 2005/144 pp/\$23.50

OVERALL RATING Very good
STRENGTHS A thoughtful,
thorough overview of breast
cancer, from prevention
to diagnosis, treatment to
supportive care
WEAKNESSES Limited
diagnostic algorithms
AUDIENCE Family physicians,
nurses, and allied health
professionals caring for
women with breast cancer

Fast Facts: Breast Cancer is a thorough overview of breast cancer written by 2 experienced clinicians who have both contributed much to the field. The book has an excellent introduction followed by thoughtful discussion of the pathophysiology of this complex disease, and includes a superbly presented and updated evidence-based discussion of the current opinion on adjuvant hormonal therapy.

The absolute risk of breast cancer for various groups is clearly presented, as is the usefulness of risk-reduction strategies. Suggestions for the management of symptoms of advanced cancer patients, such as pain, anemia, hypercalcemia, and others, are included.

Where this book falls short is in the presentation of the various algorithms that inform clinicians of the management of symptoms suggestive



of breast cancer. For example, the book advises that all patients presenting with a lump be referred directly to an oncologist, without any further investigation. There is no differentiation between patients who present with a spontaneous nipple discharge and patients with a discharge elicited only by squeezing. Enhancements in these diagnostic algorithms would allow better use of limited surgical oncology resources and would encourage earlier diagnosis of those patients with features suggestive of breast cancer.

Nonetheless, the book is a good read, with excellent illustrations, clear messages, and many helpful tips. The book introduces the reader to the evidence-based tool “Adjuvant! Online” (www.adjuvantonline.com) and provides good descriptions and illustrations explaining reconstructive options postmastectomy.

Well priced at \$23.50, this book is a good reference to have on hand when a patient with a family history of breast cancer wants to know the likelihood of being diagnosed in the next 10 years, or when your postmenopausal patient with a recent breast cancer diagnosis wants your opinion on the best choice of aromatase inhibitor.

—Ruth Heisey MD CCFP FCFP

Dr Heisey is a family physician at the Women's College Hospital in Toronto, Ont, a GP oncologist at the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, and an Associate Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Toronto.