

BOOK REVIEW



Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases

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The *2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*, more commonly referred to as the *Red Book*, is an invaluable reference source for pharmacists and other clinicians who provide care for pediatric patients. The *Red Book* is written by the Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and is published by the AAP. The Committee on Infectious Diseases develops guidelines for the AAP for control of pediatric infectious diseases, and at intervals of every 3 years a composite summary of these guidelines and recommendations is published. The Committee on Infectious Diseases prepares the guidelines and recommendations contained in the *Red Book* through consensus with liaisons from various organizations (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration) and over 300 collaborators. The 2006 *Red Book* contains information current as of January 2006. New recommendations made from the Committee on Infectious Diseases between *Red Book* editions is published in the journal *Pediatrics* and in *AAP News*. The most up-to-date recommendations are available at www.aapredbook.org. At this Internet

site, pharmacists can sign up to receive automatic electronic messages of new information and recommendations on pediatric infectious diseases.

The *Red Book* contains 5 major sections: 1) Active and Passive Immunization, 2) Recommendations for Care of Children in Special Circumstances, 3) Summaries of Infectious Diseases, 4) Antimicrobial Agents and Related Therapy, and 5) Antimicrobial Prophylaxis. Following these sections are 10 Appendices, such as Guide to Contraindications and Precautions to Immunizations and State Immunization Requirements for School Attendance. Information is contained in each of these sections which can be useful to a variety of pediatric pharmacists, regardless of practice setting or specialty.

Section 1, Active and Passive Immunization, contains considerable information on pediatric immunization and the use of vaccines and related products. This section contains useful resources other than specific vaccine product information, including Informing Patients and Parents, and Parental Refusal of Immunization. Specific recommendations are described in this section on how to discuss pediatric immunization with parents or caregivers expressing reservations or refusing vaccine administration to their child. Active Immunization includes numerous topics on the use of vaccine products, including handling and storage, minimum intervals between doses, simultaneous administration of multiple vaccines, and vaccine safety and contraindications. Due to increasing complexity of the current pediatric immunization schedule, it is not difficult to imagine the variety of questions that may arise in routine daily practice regarding the use of the available vaccine products. Adverse effects are a common concern parents harbor about pediatric immunization. Section 1 also contains information specific to this area, including Parental Misconceptions about Immunizations and Internet Resources for Immunization Information. Parents may easily become concerned over immunization after reviewing the variety of poor Internet sites available which emphasize the dangers of immunization. Information on

Passive Immunization and Immunization in Special Clinical Circumstances is also contained in Section 1. Useful recommendations listed here describe the use of vaccine products (including live vaccines) in pregnancy and in immunocompromised children, and immunization of children receiving corticosteroids (e.g., for asthma exacerbations).

Section 2, Recommendations for Care of Children in Special Circumstances, provides recommendations for several important, but perhaps uncommon, topics to pharmacists. Information contained here includes Biological Terrorism, School Health, Bite Wounds, and Medical Evaluation of Internationally Adopted Children for Infectious Diseases, among others. Topics more useful to pharmacists include Human Milk (e.g., Antimicrobial Agents in Human Milk) and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Adolescents and Children. Information on sexually transmitted infections includes general information, such as prophylaxis after sexual victimization. Disease-specific recommendations are listed in Section 3, and are reflective of the 2006 sexually transmitted infectious treatment guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Section 3, Summaries of Infectious Diseases, may be the most frequently consulted section of the *Red Book*. Contained in this section are descriptions of 151 specific infectious diseases (e.g., Pertussis, Kawasaki Disease, Influenza, Staphylococcal Infections, Tinea Capitis). Described for each infectious disease are: Clinical Manifestations, Etiology, Epidemiology, Diagnostic Tests, Treatment, Isolation of the Hospitalized Patient, and Control Measures.

Section 4, Antimicrobial Agents and Related Therapy, can be very useful to pharmacists. Section 4 contains Principles of Appropriate (antibiotic) Use for Upper Respiratory Tract Sections, listing guidelines for the appropriate use of antibiotics for common ambulatory infections (e.g., otitis media, acute sinusitis, cough illness/bronchitis, pharyngitis, common cold)

and Principles of Appropriate Use of Vancomycin. Numerous useful tables are also contained in this section, including Drug Interactions Involving Antimicrobial Agents, and several dosing tables: antibacterial agents for newborns and beyond the newborn period, antifungal drugs, antiviral drugs, and antiparasitic drugs. Additionally, a summary table of treatment recommendations for sexually transmitted infections can be found in Section 4.

Section 5, Antimicrobial Prophylaxis, contains general treatment recommendations on prophylaxis, and recommendations specific to surgical patients, bacterial endocarditis, and neonatal ophthalmia.

In summary, the *Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases* is a very useful and necessary reference source for pediatric pharmacists, as it contains information and treatment recommendations on a wide variety of pediatric infectious diseases. As the *Red Book* is prepared by the American Academy of Pediatrics, in consultation with several hundred experts, the recommendations contained in it provide considerable influence. The *Red Book* is not without limitations, however. Because it is published only every three years, some information becomes out-of-date. As described above, pharmacists can receive electronic *Red Book* updates, and pharmacists should continually strive to be aware of current primary literature sources for relevant infectious disease pharmacotherapy treatments. The *Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases* is available in several formats, including hardcover text, softcover text, an online version, and Red Book Plus (includes softcover text, online version, and CD-ROM).

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