

Book review

Sadler, C., White, J., Everitt, H. and Simon, C. 2007: *Women's health*. Oxford: Oxford General Practice Library, Oxford University Press. Illustrated. 372 pp, £5.99 paperback. ISBN: 978-0-19-857138-4.

This neat and compact book of 372 pages from the Oxford General Practice Library (OGPL) contains a very large amount of information starting with an introduction on women in society, followed by five clear chapters – breast disease, gynaecological problems, contraception, pregnancy and mental health. A further chapter deals with miscellaneous topics and the last section provides useful information and contacts. Although the characteristics of women in the general population are identified in the first chapter, and there is a chapter specifically dealing with mental health problems as well as information about various specific physical conditions encountered in menopausal and post-menopausal women, some more information about the specific social stresses encountered by women may have been useful, eg, very young lone women head of household or elderly women caring for a disabled child or partner.

The normal key features of the OGPL – different coloured boxes for GP notes, advice for patients, figures/diagrams, tables and GP contracts – are found in this guide too, and facilitate the reading of the chapters and the identification

of key points, diagnostic paths and treatment options. The patients' advice boxes are clear and could easily be incorporated in the care of patients at the time of diagnosis or when deciding care/treatment options.

Although the book is small in size, the content is extremely well cross-referenced, and in many instances, further references are made to either The Cochrane Library, NICE or other major guidelines referencing body. Some information is supported by the notification of a reference for either a randomised controlled trial or a systematic review published in a major journal. Because of the volume of information, these references are not given in full; this is understandable, but is probably one of the very few limitations of this publication. To balance this, a very large number of references to relevant websites is provided and this will be useful for both GPs and patients.

The overwhelming impression is one of an affordable and well-referenced information pocketbook that would be extremely useful for GPs and other primary care health workers, including nurses and health visitors.

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