BOOK REVIEWS

THE DENTIST'S DRUG AND PRESCRIPTION GUIDE

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The dentist's drug and prescription guide is co-written by two American dental specialists. The text is focussed toward general dental practitioners, the aim being to give support and advice on evidence based prescribing for their patients.

The subject matter of this book is extremely scientific, with that in mind the book is relatively difficult to plough through in its entirety. The authors boast an easy-to-read question and answer format. Whilst this is a good way to retain information, the layout does not offer such a straight forward point of reference if one has a specific area of interest or query to be addressed. It has been some time since I studied pharmacology as a dental undergraduate but the first introductory chapter served as a nice refresher. The third and the seventh chapters were also very useful but I feel

the textbook did have a significant amount of information that is beyond the scope of general dental practitioners. Where the book falls down is the fact that it is written for practitioners with a DDS, whose pharmacological requirements are beyond those required in the UK. Whilst being better informed can be beneficial, sadly the transatlantic crossover can lead to some confusion. Some of the drug names and dosages are incorrect to what we would prescribe in the UK; hence the main aim of the book is not fulfilled.

The rest of the book offers a well-rounded overview of possible scripts that one may encounter in our profession, whether in primary or secondary care. Each chapter is full of interesting facts about drugs we use in our day to day lives, so for this reason I would recommend a read. Did you know that a true allergy to narcotics like codeine is extremely rare but that opioids bind to histamine receptors to cause adverse

effects such as itching, which is not a true allergic response? Did you also know that about 92% of epinephrine in impregnated gingival retraction chord is systemically absorbed, which can be equal to 3.9 cartridges of LA? For this reason it is advised that their use is avoided in cardiac patients or an alternative like ferric sulphate is used instead.

Whilst the book falls short on its main aim to provide dentists with a point of reference, in the UK we can use the BNF for doses and interactions. This book is most useful for giving a succinct, interesting and comprehensive overview of all things pharmacological in dentistry.

I would probably recommend using a library to loan this textbook rather than purchasing it, other books will provide better reference for the areas GPs will need on a more regular basis.

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