

Review by Kathleen A. Head, ND

The Clinician's Handbook of Natural Medicine

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Harcourt Publishers Ltd.; harcourthealth.com

ISBN 0-443-07080-6; Softcover; 522 pgs

The Clinician's Handbook of Natural Medicine is a handy reference guide, "giving the busy clinician easy access to decision-making material." It covers 74 of the more commonly seen conditions in clinical practice, from acne vulgaris to viral pharyngitis. Each chapter covers a diagnostic summary, general and therapeutic considerations, a concise therapeutic approach, and flowchart for the condition in question. The treatment sections integrate the most well-researched botanical and nutritional approaches. Flowcharts allow the clinician to quickly determine the need for conventional intervention, rule out obstacles to the cure or contributing factors to the condition, and tailor a natural approach, suitable for each patient's needs. When indicated, essential laboratory diagnostic assessments are also outlined.

The book is designed to be used as a quick reference guide in conjunction with the more extensive *Textbook of Natural Medicine* by the same authors. For those wishing a more extensive discussion of pathophysiology, mechanisms of action of nutrients and botanicals noted, and lengthy reference lists, the "Textbook" should be referred to. The "Handbook" is to be used when the patient is in the office and decisions need to be made quickly.

"It's a popular reference book, utilized by student clinicians. I often see student clinicians carrying it in their medical bags. As a physician, it prompts me to remember the options when putting together a treatment plan in the midst of my busy practice days," says Dr. Hazel Philp, clinical supervisor at Bastyr's Center for Natural Health.

In addition to botanicals and nutrients, other alternative treatments are often noted, including hydrotherapy, acupuncture, IV therapy, and natural hormones. The best-researched treatments are discussed in more detail. Besides natural therapeutic options, the book also briefly discusses conventional options. For example, the section on hyperthyroidism briefly discusses drug therapy, surgery, and radioactive iodine.

This book is a valuable addition to the library of any practitioner of natural medicine.