

Brucellosis in Humans and Animals

WHO, FAO, and World Organization for Animal Health. WHO Press, Geneva, Switzerland, 2006. SBN 978 92 4 154713 0. Pages 98. USD 22.50. Developing countries USD 15.75.

Brucellosis is uncommon in Sri Lanka, but continues to be an important human disease in many parts of the world, with an annual reported incidence in excess of 500 000. It is a zoonosis transmitted to humans almost exclusively by contact with infected animals or their products such as meat, milk and cheese. Its history in relation to human habitats, economies and migrations is a fascinating subject of itself. And ever since the early weeks of my internship year, in which my chief the late Dr Wickrema Wijenaik diagnosed brucellosis in a 55-year old farmer from Moneragala District, admitted with a 20-day history of fever, on the basis of right epididymo-orchitis and sacro-iliitis queried by a radiologist on a plain xray of the abdomen, I have been intrigued by the disease.

This short book on brucellosis is concise,

comprehensive, well-illustrated, reader-friendly and beautifully produced. Separate chapters deal with clinical features in humans and animals, laboratory diagnosis, treatment, epidemiology, prevention, and eradication of the disease in animals. I found the sections on vaccine and immune system stimulants, post-exposure prophylaxis and prevention of brucellosis in nomadic or migratory populations particularly engaging. The book has useful tables with key points clearly emphasised in boxes, and it is well referenced.

The book is a valuable reference source for clinicians, laboratory specialists and technologists, veterinary surgeons and personnel, epidemiologists, and public health specialists. It is a must for libraries devoted to medical and veterinary sciences.

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