

## SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines

Omala Wimalaratne, Anura Weerasinghe and Lucian Jayasuriya (editors). Sri Lanka Medical Association, 2008. Pp 153. ISBN 955-9386-10-7

SLMA has published a booklet with revised and updated guidelines and information on vaccines.

The booklet starts with a useful preface by Professor Lalitha Mendis that recalls the focal points in the history of immunisation and the current global status of communicable diseases. The introduction by Dr. Iyanthi Abeyewickreme summarises the evolution of this book since its last publication, stressing its new features. The joint editors have successfully moulded the chapters into a clear, readable format, happily devoid of jargon.

This publication can be considered in two parts. The first gives information on individual vaccines and the second consists of a miscellany of chapters ranging from vaccination in special circumstances such as in HIV infected persons to adverse effect reporting.

SLMA guidelines and information on vaccines 2008 offers a full coverage on EPI and non-EPI vaccines in Sri Lanka. The chapters on individual vaccines are conventional, starting with a brief description of the disease, going on to describe the type, efficacy, indications, dosage and administration, contraindications, adverse effects and storage of vaccines. The chapters on hepatitis

B vaccine and rabies vaccine deserve commendation for their concise yet comprehensive presentation. The new features include chapters on human papilloma virus vaccine, influenza vaccine and rotavirus vaccine. Chapters on surveillance and prevention of adverse events following immunisation and frequently asked questions are the other notable improvements since the previous edition.

For anyone after who may wish for extra information, there are excellent bibliographies at the end of each chapter. A closer look at these lists will strengthen confidence in the accuracy of information provided.

I have a few minor criticisms. There is redundancy of information in some chapters which could have been avoided easily. For example in the chapter on DPT vaccine, efficacy and indications overlap. The impression of 'overcrowding' in some chapters is actually due to poor formatting.

These guidelines should be made available in all the immunisation clinics and libraries of medical schools and hospitals. All postgraduate trainees, medical students and general practitioners will benefit from the expertise offered in this excellent compilation.

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