Exposure: A Guide to Sources of Infection

Dieter A. Sturchler

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Exposure: A Guide to Sources of Infection is a dense reference book suited for health professionals and public health officials working within the realm of infectious diseases. This book does not use the typical format of solely detailing microbes in succession. Instead, it takes the novel approach of organizing microbes by sources of exposure, as stated in the title. Sections include animals, the environment, foods, humans, travel, and nosocomial infections. A listing of microbes is provided in the last section, followed by an exposure checklist in the appendix.

By compiling >250 pages of references, the author has tried to give a detailed and current review of the literature. Although some readers may not find this level of detail useful, it is interesting and does propel the reader to think beyond the usual microbes and their common routes of exposure. The author is particularly sensitive to the international nature of infectious diseases and has worked hard to thoroughly discuss cases and outbreaks that have occurred throughout the world. This is particularly evident in the last section of the book, which employs the more familiar format of listing microbes alphabetically. The author cites the effects of many infectious agents by detailing where the microbe is usually found, its prevalence, virulence, and mode of spread.

As the author states, the scope of the book is not clinical but rather epidemiologic. Therefore, this publication does not specifically provide suggestions for treatment and management decisions. However, this book stresses the need to be more conscientious of the many modes of infections, which may prompt a diagnosis that otherwise may have been missed.

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Several Worlds: Reminiscences and Reflections of a Chinese-American Physician

Monto Ho

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Dr. Monto Ho is a well-known infectious disease specialist whose major achievements are in interferon research and the control of antimicrobial drug resistance. The son of a Chinese diplomat, he received his early education in Ankara, Berlin, Vienna, and Brooklyn, New York. When he was 14 years old, his father took him back to the People's Republic of China and impressed on him the importance of Chinese culture.

In the first 2 parts of this book, Dr. Ho takes readers through his experiences in childhood and adulthood. During World War II, he was deeply immersed in Chinese culture. He then studied philosophy as an undergraduate and medicine at Harvard University and received his M.D. degree in 1954. After that important period, Dr. Ho began his pioneering work in interferon research and viral infections in transplant patients at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in 1959. He then changed the direction of his research to help Taiwanese doctors face and solve the critical problem of antimicrobial drug resistance in Taiwan.

The 2 most interesting chapters in this book are "Academic Medicine" and "The Ups and Downs of a Department," in which Dr. Ho offers a behind-the-scenes perspective and looks at the role of basic disciplinary sciences at schools of public health. He describes himself as a lifelong learner and problem solver. His insights into Chinese and American cultures will put readers in a thoughtful mood.

Since 1998, Dr. Ho has organized the Taiwan Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance Program, a nationwide surveillance project indigenous to Taiwan that is supported by the National Health Research Institutes. He is also involved in the periodic surveillance of antimicrobial drug resistance through the centralized collection and testing of representative isolates from major hospital laboratories.