

BOOK REVIEWS

AIDS-Prevention and Control, Published jointly by WHO Geneva and Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1988; 169 pages, ISBN 924-156-1157, Sw. fr. 30/- US \$ 24.00 (WHO Flexicover ISBN 0-08-036142-0. (Pergamon hardcover).

This book is a compilation of the papers presented in the World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programmes for AIDS Prevention, held at London from 26th to 28th January, 1988. From this global involvement the importance and magnitude of the problem of AIDS is quite clear. One hundred and forty eight countries took part in the deliberations.

The book has been divided into five main parts. The first part comprehensively discusses the epidemiology of the disease and the basis for preventing its spread. The second part deals with the health promotion programmes for the prevention of AIDS in various countries including developed ones like France and United Kingdom and developing ones like Uganda and Brazil. This judicious mix of experiences of the countries with differing socio-economic problems gives an insight into the factors that affect social behaviour to a large extent. This also outlines the need to be innovative in designing the health promotion programmes, depending upon the prevalent circumstances in a particular country.

The third part of the book is devoted to the programmes aimed at particular target audiences i.e. high risk groups. Clearly, a major part of the effort has to be directed towards homosexuals, prostitutes etc, who are at a great risk for themselves as well as for others. At the same time, the general population also has to be persuaded to adopt more hygienic sexual practices. Here the variety of papers chosen, ranging from adolescents in Denmark to woman prostitutes in Nairobi, gives an idea of the kind

of problems to be faced by the planners of health promotion programmes. Something that emerged clearly, particularly from the experiences of working with prostitutes in Nairobi, is that the secret of success was to work with them, not for them. That the active involvement of the members from the risk groups in the campaign against AIDS is the most effective measure in communicating with the audience and getting the message across.

Part four deals with the very interesting subject of the role of counselling in AIDS at different levels i.e. AIDS patients, their close relatives and friends and peer groups etc. Therefore the doctors, and the health and social workers need to be trained in counselling techniques. It will be an important component in any future strategy adopted for the prevention of spread of AIDS and for the care of AIDS patients.

The fifth and the last part emphasises the need for improving the health care delivery system. Health workers engaged in the AIDS control programme need wide information, special training and full support; personnel, psychological and material. The complex disease that AIDS is, it imposes severe stress on the workers and at the same time gives them a feeling of inadequacy and hopelessness which needs to be removed. The papers in this part clearly define how to go about doing it.

All in all it is the first publication which comprehensively covers all aspects of AIDS prevention and control. It is a valuable document for all, directly or indirectly concerned with the AIDS control programme.

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Rohtak

Vitiligo, "Neural and Immunologic Linkages, Dutta AK : First edition, Indira publications, Calcutta, 1988; pp 75, price Rs. 75.

This small book of seventy five pages divided into eight sections on the subject of vitiligo written by Prof A K Dutta, contains an extract of a detailed study to which he has been devoted over the last three decades. Dr Dutta got his PhD after submitting his thesis on this subject in 1964. His thesis was favourably commented upon by the leading dermatologists in India and abroad. He continued his studies on the subject and collected a wealth of information by an exhaustive bibliography and experiments conducted over the years, encompassing wide aspects of the malady, which has been of great concern to those afflicted, as well as to the medical profession occupied with treatment and research of this scourge.

Clinical classification into three types i.e. acro-orificialis, segmental and vulgaris, is thought provoking. Description of various aspects on

which experiments have been conducted, is conveniently given, with discussion on relevant data, and conclusions drawn thereto. The view held by some workers about the relation of vitiligo with ABO blood groups and levels of plasma 17-AHCS, have been discussed and refuted I suppose justifiably. Experiments on peripheral autonomic changes particularly in segmental types, have been nicely brought out. The association of vitiligo with atopic diathesis, its concomitance with diabetes, thyroid disorders etc, has been well discussed. Neural and immunologic studies are wide based and although no definite association has been brought forth, the author has evoked in this direction for further study.

Review of literature and an exhaustive bibliography is a great feature of this monograph and is highly commended to be of great help for further work in this subject.

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