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Book Review

Management of Severe Malaria. A Practical Hand-
2000. vii+70pp. Price Sw.fr 15.–US$ 13.50 (in devel-
Available in English; French and Spanish in preparation.

Nine years after its first publication, this little book 
appears at last in the second edition. The authors have 
managed to keep it short and concise despite the fact that 
they have included essential new information. It even 
appears leaner owing to clearer definitions in most chapters. 
More evidence-based recommendations are the result of a decade of intense malaria research. The 
summary of relevant facts reflects the more detailed 
reference publication [WHO (2000). Severe falciparum 
malaria. Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical 
Medicine and Hygiene, 94, supplement 1].

The booklet provides an excellent guide to antimalar-
ial chemotherapy of severe falciparum malaria, right at 
the very beginning where the user will find it easily. The 
inclosure ofthe precise recommendations regarding the 
use of artemisinin derivatives in the management of 
severe falciparum malaria is highly welcome as it provides 
true alternatives to parenteral quinine treatment. The 
introduction deals briefly with uncomplicated malaria 
and is followed by an improved map of the global status of 
malaria. The definition of severe falciparum malaria has 
been updated and thoughtfully expanded by a paragraph 
'on who is at risk'. 

The parts on general management and on nursing care 
remain without major changes. The clinical features and 
management of complications in adults, pregnant wom-
men and children were amended to present knowledge. 

The major new achievement is in the diagnosis section: 
the indicators of a poor prognosis in children and adults 
with severe malaria provide essential hints at all levels of 
health care to assess severe falciparum malaria. It would 
have been a useful addition to show mature pigmented 
malaria pigment in the attached figures as these prog-
nostic indicators are not widely known in endemic areas.

The section on common errors in diagnosis and 
management, a selection of references and the most 
useful annexes on drugs, coma scales, and technical 
procedures of access to the circulation round up the 69 
pages.

The publication is an indispensable working tool for all 
clinical professional staff and other responsible health 
personnel working in hospitals or health centres in 
malarious areas of the world.

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