Textbook of Periconceptional Medicine

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This is an excellent textbook covering the emerging field of periconceptual medicine. The introductory chapters cover the science and general issues around the preconception period. Smoking, alcohol, recreational drug use, nutrition and exercise are covered in detail including some of the latest evidence with regard to pregnancy. The final chapter in this introduction details accurate risk assessment relating to lifestyle and pre-existing medical conditions.

The main body of the textbook then covers preparing the high-risk patient for pregnancy. This is one of few textbooks to cover the preconceptual issues of most commonly occurring medical conditions in women of reproductive age. Organ transplantation, renal disease, cardiac disease, hypertension, endocrine problems and diabetes are comprehensively covered. The authors not only cover the pertinent management issues but go into the evidence base for best clinical practice. The chapter on pre-existing mental health issues is particularly useful as this is a complex field that many obstetricians and mental health specialists find difficult to confidently counsel patients about.

The problems of achieving pregnancy are covered in 11 chapters. The authors also address the important issues around migration and patients from the developing world. The information is detailed and the pathophysiology of more common medical problems explained in depth. This section will be particularly useful for infertility specialists. The final section covering the management of early pregnancy is an apt way to complete the textbook. Many specialists dealing with these women will have the opportunity of optimizing their care, early in pregnancy, before they book formally for maternity care.

I found this a comprehensive guide to periconceptual care. It is a textbook that different subspecialists in obstetrics and gynaecology and medicine will find immensely useful. As the field of periconceptual medicine is increasingly recognized as a critical part of providing high-quality maternity care, this textbook will become an integral part of postgraduate training and continuing medical education. The editors should be congratulated on this ambitious textbook.

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