

from cover to cover as I did. Because it gathers 19 chapters separately authored, there is much redundancy. Anatomy, physiology (especially transepidermal water loss), microbiology, vestibulitis, douching, history of feminine hygiene products, urinary incontinence, and hair removal are all discussed in more than one chapter. On the other hand, as a clinician, I wished for more space devoted to benefits and adverse effects of therapeutic vaginal creams, as well as ingredient and side effect details for the plethora of vaginal lubricants marketed. Because few reports exist, the authors were unable to educate me about adverse reactions to hair coloring agents or premoistened towelettes.

One of the most unique chapters in the book is entitled "Are Vaginal Symptoms Ever Normal?" It explores the lack of concurrence among descriptions of what constitutes normal discharge and odor, and how much irritation is normal. This chapter is just one example of why this book deserves to be utilized by all medical practitioners engaged in and investigators advancing the practice of women's health care. The lack of understanding of what is normal regarding the female genital skin and mucosa and how best to preserve health and comfort in the area should propel an explosion of research. This book offers plenty of ideas for what questions could be asked!

*Dianne Silvestri, MD
Natick, Massachusetts*

doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2007.10.644

Tropical dermatology

Stephen K. Tyring, Omar Lupi, and Ulrich R. Hengge. Houston, 2006, Elsevier. 515 pages. \$109.00

During the past few decades, there has been an explosion of interest in tropical medicine among the dermatology community. One likely explanation is that dermatologists in Western countries are encountering more and more patients with tropical diseases, either imported during international travel or related to a progressively more multiethnic society (immigrants, refugees, or adoptees). Although in tropical areas such diseases are usually well known and easily recognized by experienced physicians, at our latitudes the rarity of and unfamiliarity with them may lead to problems of differential diagnosis and, consequently, improper management. *Tropical Dermatology* represents both a practical and comprehensive guide to the mucocutaneous

manifestations of tropical diseases. This book is concise enough to be read cover-to-cover, yet authoritative enough to be used as a reference as well. Moreover, the huge number of color images and figures serve as a pseudo-atlas and facilitate an understanding of the various topics.

Apart from the expected, systematic, and more or less conventional description of the most common tropical infections and infestations, this manual shines with its section dedicated to noninfectious conditions. Environmental causes of dermatitis, which are often missing from other texts, are included here, and may represent a recurrent source of cutaneous problems in returned travelers. Contact to tropical plants, for example, can cause mechanical injury, primary irritant (toxic) dermatitis, allergic phyto dermatitis, or contact urticaria. Taking into account the frequency of exotic-sea vacations and the popularity of tropical aquariums, another section of the book addresses the dermatologic manifestations of marine and freshwater exposures to various organisms, such as bacteria, sponges, coelenterates, worms, echinoderms, mollusks, and fish.

One nice feature of this book faces the issues of the prospective traveler. This section prepares the reader to counsel travelers about potential dermatoses, infections, and environmental hazards specific to the area of destination, and discusses general preventive measures, including appropriate vaccinations and prophylaxis. Moreover, it offers practical and useful recommendations on what might be considered for a travel medical kit. Because tropical arthropods act repeatedly as vectors of disease carrying bacterial, protozoan, and helminthic pathogens, this section details practical information on how to prevent bites and stings (including the use of repellents, insecticides, bed nets, and infrastructure improvement). General preventive measures for travelers concerning food, beverages, poisons, weather, altitude, walking, and safe sexual practices are also included. In addition, there is helpful posttravel advice aimed at facilitating early recognition of signs or symptoms of travel-related illnesses.

It seems increasingly important that current dermatologists become acquainted with tropical mucocutaneous diseases to promptly diagnose and consequently avoid potential complications. *Tropical Dermatology* represents a valuable tool that guides a thorough approach to and treatment of patients with tropical diseases.

*Sergio Chimenti
Rome, Italy*

doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2007.10.011