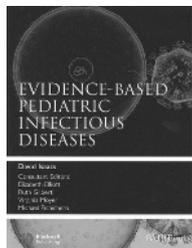


## Evidence-based pediatric infectious diseases

By David Isaacs, Elizabeth Elliot, Ruth Gilbert, Virginia Moyer, Michael Pichichero. Published by Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2007, pp 332, £59.99 (soft cover). ISBN-13 978-1-4051-4858-0



I was so excited about the publication of this book that I had it on order from Amazon 4 months before its release date.

Written by David Isaacs (with editorial input from an impressive range of international experts), this

book sets out to bring together the evidence base for the diagnosis, management and treatment of infectious diseases in children. It carries out this task admirably.

In the preface, Isaacs states that “There is a tension between providing useful management recommendations and between providing detailed evidence that allows clinicians to make their own decisions”. He then sets himself the unenviable task of laying out a coherent evidence base for managing infectious diseases in children. He and his team have managed to achieve this in style, and in just 332 pages.

By opening with a chapter devoted to evidence-based practice, Isaacs achieves

two things. Not only does he drive home the need for such a book in paediatric infectious diseases, he also lays out for the reader the very foundations of evidence-based medicine as a concept, before moving on to the mechanics of building an evidence base.

Before addressing his subject specifically, the author has included a chapter on the rational use of antibiotics. This describes “Eight steps to reduce antibiotic resistance”, which should be required reading for any prescriber.

Each of the subsequent clinical chapters follows the same overall structure and is based around “illustrative case studies”.

Chapters 3–17 take the reader on an alphabetical trip through the body from “Cardiac infections” to “Urinary tract infections”, and the book finishes with a chapter on viral infections. Predictably, HIV is the only single disease with a dedicated chapter.

As its title suggests, however, the unique selling point of this book is the inclusion, throughout, of the evidence to support each management step. Each chapter finishes off with an extensive list of references from which this evidence has been drawn.

The three appendices devoted to antimicrobial use provide a useful conclusion.

Another highlight for me was the single “Abbreviations” page at the beginning of

the book. It was less a page of definitions and more an explanation of the basic language of evidence-based medicine. Having read it, I felt for the first time that I had a more confident understanding of the concept of relative risk and odds ratios!

With a recommended retail price of £59.99, it is worth shopping around to find a special offer. However, I would recommend this book for the library shelves of any paediatric unit. Personally, I will be turning frequently to this volume as a reference book for my everyday practice.

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## CORRECTION

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Deane CR, Goss D, O’Driscoll S, *et al.* Transcranial Doppler scanning and the assessment of stroke risk in children with haemoglobin sickle cell disease (*Arch Dis Child* 2008;**93**:138–41). The title of this paper was published incorrectly and should be: Transcranial Doppler scanning and the assessment of stroke risk in children with HbSC disease. We apologise for this error.

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