Manual of Toxicologic Emergencies



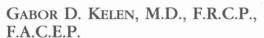
Eric K. Noji / Gabor D. Kelen

Manual of Toxicologic Emergencies

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Preface

The purpose of this *Manual of Toxicologic Emergencies* is to aid physicians in the initial assessment and management of such emergencies. The book is intended for use by health care providers who deal with toxic ingestions and overdoses and those who evaluate and manage patients during the period immediately after a toxic ingestion or exposure.

Although there are several acceptable approaches to dealing with toxicologic exposures, we have attempted to delineate an approach based on the latest accepted knowledge and methods from the literature, taking into account the experience of the contributing authors, all of whom manage such emergencies as part of their professional lives.

When we began to explore the toxicologic literature and review standard texts, we found that much of the information was fragmented and that no single source contained all the relevant information required to manage the initial stages of poisoning. We do not intend this book to be an exhaustive, classic reference text; however, material in each section and chapter has been distilled from various authoritative sources to bring together in one format all the pertinent information required to manage toxicologic emergencies.

The book has been designed to allow easy access to detailed information, using a systematic format to be followed during the active management of poisonings. It can also stand as a reference.

The text has been divided into five major sections. In Part I, general considerations such as epidemiology, sources of information, first aid, and prehospital management are discussed. Part II presents general management techniques. In this section we introduce the concept of advanced poisoning treatment and life support (APTLS), which should be invoked as the initial approach with all patients with known or possible toxic ingestions or exposures. APTLS is similar in concept to advanced cardiac life support (ACLS), advanced poisoning life support, and advanced trauma life support (ATLS), well known to emergency practitioners. This section also discusses general management measures, such as prevention of absorption, enhancement of elimination, use of the toxicology laboratory, disposition considerations, staff precautions, and medical-legal issues. Part III details approaches to be taken in specific situations that may complicate the evaluation or

treatment of the poisoned patient. Such complexities as the management of concomitant head injury, pregnancy, intoxication with alcohol, violent patients, and withdrawal states are covered. In Part IV, systematic information to be acquired during patient evaluation (history, physical examination) that can aid in identifying the specific poisonings is detailed. Finally, Part V discusses specific poisonings and exposures.

Each chapter is organized in the same format to allow easy access to information. Within each chapter, controversial areas are acknowledged and special considerations that may affect management are noted. At the end of each chapter, guidelines for admission, consultation, discharge, and patient transfer are given.

Virtually all of the contributors are emergency practitioners with academic backgrounds, each with expertise in his or her area. We are indebted for their enthusiastic support of this work.

We have enjoyed developing this text and its conceptual approach to poisoning and toxic exposure. We hope you enjoy using the book and find it helpful in clinical application.

Eric K. Noji, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.E.P. Gabor D. Kelen, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.A.C.E.P.

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Eric K. Noji, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.E.P. Gabor D. Kelen, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.A.C.E.P.

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