**Imported Infectious Diseases: The Impact in Developed Countries**

Fernando Cabo. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Elsevier, 2014. 240 pp. $200.00 (hardcover). ISBN: 978-190-756-8572.

The intriguing title brings to mind West Nile Virus, severe acute respiratory syndrome, coronavirus, Middle East Respiratory syndrome coronavirus, and Ebola traveling across the globe, joining pan-demics actual (human immunodeficiency virus [HIV]) and threatened (influenza during the next antigenic shift) as threats to life far from their geographic origins. Intentional spread of life-threatening pathogens as agents for biologic warfare or bioterrorism would also represent imported infection constituting a new and serious threat to developed countries. A reference book that addressed either or both of these threats would be a very timely and important contribution. This text, however, although packed with well-referenced details about a wide variety of infections of mostly tropical origins, does not fully address the current impact of imported infections in developed countries. It is oriented to illness among immigrants from less to more developed countries, which is also an important topic, with a nod to the health of travelers to less developed countries.

The introductory chapters cover epidemiology of infections in immigrants, surveillance for infection in developed countries, and a few clinical syndromes, such as fever and diarrhea. Of 19 chapters, 13 are devoted to descriptions of classic tropical diseases, mostly parasitic and bacterial and a few viral. For each pathogen, the chapter describes the pathophysiology, immunology, epidemiology, clinical features, laboratory diagnosis, treatment, and disease control in the countries of origin. The chapters on malaria and HIV include interesting detail regarding vaccine development; the chapter on tuberculosis makes brief mention of multiple drug resistance and HIV-tuberculosis coinfection; the discussion of strongyloidiasis includes disseminated disease among immunocompromised hosts; and the section on filariasis provides information on use of community wide intermittent treatment to achieve local control. An impressive list of references accompanies each chapter, including both research publications and recommendations for diagnostics, treatment, and control from well-recognized national and international organizations. The lack of endnotes or footnotes in the text sometimes makes it challenging to link narrative information to its source.

The introductory chapters on fever and diarrhea provide an overview of the diagnosis of syndromes with overlapping features but different causes among patients from developing countries seeking treatment in technologically sophisticated settings. These chapters include extensive lists of possible causative organisms and suggest diagnostic strategies in algorithms. Chapters on individual diseases briefly describe each illness without details on differential diagnosis. The sections on laboratory diagnosis list relevant tests without detail on parasitologic diagnosis but lack a diagnostic strategy that would serve a reader evaluating a patient. Maps illustrating prevalence rates of various pathogens are hard to read, and the distribution of related organisms included in single maps are very difficult to distinguish. Descriptions of life cycles are included for each parasite, but the text is not easy to follow, and there is a surprising absence of figures to assist the reader in understanding complex life cycles. Information on treatment of specific pathogens distinguishes appropriately between active and inactive infection (in neurocysticercosis, for example) and offers specific approaches for varying clinical syndromes (ordinary vs complicated malaria, and malaria occurring in nonimmune vs semi-immune patients). The treatment sections include current lists of medications along with dosing details, side effects, and information of medication availability and use around the world. Treatment recommendations from international organizations...
are highlighted, including the World Health Organization, the European Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and national organizations, such as the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, the book does not provide enough treatment detail to make a clinician who is unfamiliar with a disease entity feel comfortable treating a seriously ill patient.

This compact volume is well referenced and provides current information on a wide range of illnesses often considered tropical diseases, from a developed country perspective. The level of detail and scholarship is an extraordinary accomplishment for a single author. The book does not achieve what its title suggests, however; it does not adequately address the health of immigrants to developed countries nor the risks and containment of imported infectious threats. It does not provide as much useful information on diagnosis and management of specific infections as other texts on infectious or tropical diseases. A student of public health may find this book a convenient introduction or reference on tropical infections, but those charged with disease control and providers of direct patient care are not as well served.

**Note**

**Potential conflict of interest.** Author certifies no potential conflicts of interest.

The author has submitted the ICMJE Form for Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest. Conflicts that the editors consider relevant to the content of the manuscript have been disclosed.

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Clinical Infectious Diseases® 2015;61(7):1214–5
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DOI: 10.1093/cid/civ557