

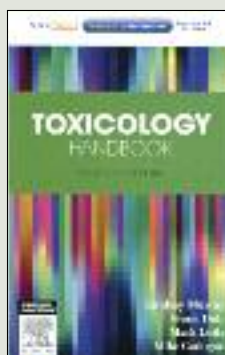
## BOOK REVIEW

### TOXICOLOGY HANDBOOK

**By Lindsay Murray, Frank Daly, Mark Little and Mike Cadogan.**  
**Second edition. Churchill Livingstone/Elsevier, Sydney, 2011.**  
**Soft cover, 529 pages. RRP \$84.95.**

ISBN-13: 9780729539395

The challenge for the authors of a successful and very impressive first edition is to find a way to improve on it. For *Toxicology Handbook*, a second challenge was keeping the concise format of the original edition without drifting into a thicker book, too heavy for a pocket or quick reference book. The second edition is a success on both counts, and also offers new practical information in a clinical format.



As Professor Anthony F.T. Brown states in the foreword, poisoning is a common emergency department presentation, and the third major injury cause of hospital admissions after falls and motor vehicle accidents. Also, any doctor or health professional dealing with the increasing mental health patient load needs to be able to discern drug effects and have the ability to safely 'medically clear' the patient. This edition of *Toxicology Handbook*, with its clinical problem-based organisation, will help.

Whether for resuscitation or seizures, the book follows a logical 'patient-in-front-of-you' approach. The accompanying tables and lists are rich in relevant information.

Some of the new or expanded topics that are covered in the new edition are:

- amphetamine abuse, dependence and withdrawal – an increasingly common presentation
- snake bite – essential knowledge for emergency doctors
- solvent abuse, dependence and withdrawal
- mushroom and plant poisoning, with good use of tables showing grouped clinical factors
- ingestion of button batteries, with important diagnostic pitfalls listed
- intravenous lipid emulsion – a new antidote and therapy, the use of which is still being defined.

Personally, I would like to see the telephone numbers for poisons information (Appendix 1) appearing on the inside cover of the book, rather than buried in the back, possibly with a checklist of desirable patient information to provide to these services.

This is a very good book that should be easily accessible to any health professional – doctor, nurse or paramedic – who is likely to see and make decisions about a potentially poisoned patient.

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