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**Self-test questions**

*The following statements are either true or false (answers on page 75)*

1. Complementary medicines may increase the risk of bleeding in patients taking warfarin without affecting the international normalised ratio (INR).
2. Vitamin K supplements may decrease the effect of warfarin.

**CD review**

**John Murtagh. The General Practice Series – Single User CD-ROM.**

**Price \$195. 10% discount for Australian Prescriber readers.\***

*Ieva Ozolins, General Practitioner, Kangaroo Island Medical Clinic, Kingscote, SA*

'The General Practice Series' is an interactive CD-ROM encompassing three books written by one of Australia's most eminent general practitioners and educators. It is presented as the 'on-screen' alternative to the print versions of Murtagh's 'General Practice', 'Practice Tips' and 'Patient Education'. After confirming with my practice manager that my office computer fulfilled the system requirements of the CD-ROM, I managed to install the software and subsequently use the program without expert assistance.

I found the program useful in providing patient education sheets in the office, as it allowed me to call up and print out single page information sheets and to discuss the information with the patient on the spot. The software also provided an easily accessible reference for the diagnosis and management of common and unusual patient presentations. The on-screen format of 'General Practice' mirrors that of the original 1994 textbook currently sitting on the bookshelves in my practice, with some additional chapters and content in many of the chapters. The font used in the text is appropriate for reading on screen, however I found that it is still easier to read longer entries from the print version, rather than scrolling through each page on the computer. The drop-down menu system is

easy to operate, and the 'Help' icon will get you going if you are not confident when first opening the program. Generally I used the drop-down menu looking for specific conditions, although the package allows for searching through the individual texts by providing a contents page for each book, accessed from the home page.

As in the original print versions, information is presented in a clear, methodical manner. Professor Murtagh's approach is simple to follow whether looking at a symptom or symptom complex, or for a specific condition. Pointing to a reference number in the body of the text easily accessed key references. Unfortunately the text has not been updated to reflect some of the more recent changes faced in general practice, for example, in the childhood immunisation schedule and the availability of new forms of delivery of hormonal contraception and hormone replacement therapy. With this caution, 'The General Practice Series' software package should prove invaluable to medical students, registrars and many experienced general practitioners, just as the printed texts have in the past.

**Minimum system requirements**

- Microsoft Windows 95, 98 or NT 4 operating system
- PC with 486 MHz processor
- 16 MB RAM for Windows 95 or 98, or 32 MB for NT
- Mouse or other pointing device
- CD-ROM drive
- SVGA colour monitor, 256 colours with 800 x 600 resolution (higher recommended)
- 100 MB hard disk space for full installation

\* Contact McGraw-Hill (02)94159888, quote code MUR0502.