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Book review

Handbook of drug administration via enteral feeding tubes. 3rd ed.

White R, Bradnam V London: Pharmaceutical Press; 2015. 732 pages

This new edition covers over 400 drugs and includes 29 new monographs. It aims to support safe and effective prescribing by providing practical recommendations on the administration of drugs via enteral tubes. Information in the book comes from pharmaceutical companies, published information (which is limited), and research undertaken largely by pharmacists.

The introductory chapters cover technical and pharmaceutical issues with tubes, drugs and administration, as well as tube blockage, drug errors and occupational exposure.

The monographs list UK formulations and relevant data for each drug. Information is provided on sites of oral absorption, alternative routes, interactions with food and enteral feeds, health and safety precautions, altering available products, and intragastric and intrajejunal administration procedures.

The products listed may differ from those available in Australia. The print is very small, and the book does not cover administration to patients with swallowing difficulties. A publication by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, the Australian Don't Rush to Crush Handbook, covers administration via enteral tubes in less detail, but includes information on swallowing difficulty and products available in Australia. There is some overlap between the two books, but each contains unique content.

This is a practical book which contains more detail on drug administration via enteral tubes than is readily available elsewhere. Because such administration is generally 'off-label' (outside the approved product information), those prescribing, dispensing or administering drugs via enteral tubes may be liable if the patient experiences adverse effects due to the route or alteration of the product. This makes reliable information on the topic particularly valuable. The handbook would be useful to nurses, pharmacists, doctors and dietitians who regularly deal with patients on enteral feeds.

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