



San Francisco: UCSF Nursing Press; 2004.
ISBN: 0-943671-21-3.
1024 pages; \$100.00
(Paperback)

Women's Primary Health Care: Protocols for Practice 2nd edition

Winifred L Star, Lisa L Lommel, and Maureen T Shannon, editors

Review by Allison Waczek, MSN, FNP

As nurse practitioners continue to expand their role in medicine, protocols for guiding practice are paramount. Each state governs and defines a nurse's scope of practice; the State of California defines this scope in the Nurse Practice Act.¹ In the book *Women's Primary Health Care: Protocols for Practice*, written by Winifred Star, RNP, Lisa Lommel, FNP, and Maureen Shannon, FNP, the authors set out to develop practice guidelines that are conventionally comprehensive but also include such sensitive topics as lesbian health, sexual abuse, and violence. The disease-specific protocols presented in the book emphasize women's health with the intention that they be used as guidelines for practice. The authors have accomplished this tall task masterfully.

The title *Women's Primary Health Care* is slightly misleading: Although the focus is on women's health, many of the disease-treatment protocols listed in the book are pertinent to men's health as well. Nonetheless, in each section of the book, the authors do use a wonderful technique of focusing on pathophysiology specific for women as compared with men. This technique was executed particularly well when discussing cardiovascular disorders—and specifically angina, a condition whose frequently late or misdiagnosis in women can result in a negative clinical outcome.

This book is filled with the latest information that would delight any nurse practitioner—whether student, beginning, or seasoned practitioner. Each section has a familiar narrative flow that begins with the pathophysiology of the disease followed by a SOAP (Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan) format, advice regarding when to consult a mentor, important reminders regarding patient education, and an extensive bibliography. The book is filled with evidence-based treatment

plans that are supported by a bibliography that enables the practitioner to investigate further as needed. However, although this extensive book of protocols certainly offers some useful benefit for any reader, seasoned nurse practitioners might find that the book contains more information than they need. I therefore see this book as applicable mainly for nursing programs throughout the country: The book provides a great framework for practice and can serve as a multipurpose resource. Because no protocol for nursing practice should replace the sound clinical judgment necessary in each case, this book can be considered a fine adjunct to both common sense and sound medical advice.

I suggest that future editions consider including a section on obesity in the category of behavioral disorders. Whether obesity is conceived as a disease or as a physical sign, we can agree that the incidence of obesity—and its frequent sequelae, heart disease and diabetes—is increasing and therefore warrants discussion of treatment and prevention. In the current edition of the book, obesity is discussed in the Cardiovascular Disorders section as a comorbid condition; placing it in the Eating Disorders section might be more appropriate.

Overall, this book is excellently written and edited, focusing and expanding on the health and well-being of women. I look forward to adding it to my resource library for future use; I only wish that I had access to it when I was in nursing school. ♦

Reference

1. Official California legislative information. California business and professions code. Chapter 6. Nursing [homepage on the Internet]. [cited 2005 Jan 19]. Available from: www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/calawquery?codesection=bpc&codebody=&hits=20.

Allison Waczek, MSN, FNP, graduated from the San Diego State University School of Nursing and from the nurse practitioner program at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine. She has worked for Kaiser Permanente for 16 years and currently works in the Department of Preventive Medicine at KP San Diego. E-mail: allison.d.waczek@kp.org.

The Soul's Ambassadors

Words are the soul's ambassadors, who go
Abroad upon her errands to and fro

— James Howell, 1594-1666, writer