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FOREWORD: A COVID-19 Overview for Primary Care Clinicians



Dr. Michael Klatte and his colleagues from Dayton Children’s Hospital and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center have crafted a comprehensive volume on what we know about SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for the present pandemic.¹ Given the ongoing changes regarding variants, vaccinations and public health measures for primary and secondary prevention they have wisely provided addresses for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC) websites and focused their comments on important, basic information relevant to primary care clinicians in the following areas:

The epidemiology of the virus has been closely monitored since the beginning of the pandemic. The ongoing examination of public waste water for the presence and amount of viral material has emerged as an important public health strategy as home testing has increased in availability and popularity. Home testing for COVID-19 infection has contributed to the decrease in test positive cases reported to local departments of public health. The authors provide a CDC website and discuss the diverse presentations that characterize COVID-19 infections in children. Symptoms may include anosmia and ageusia even for mildly ill children. The management of children ill with COVID-19 infection has continued to evolve during the pandemic. The authors address outpatient management of ill children and provide a comprehensive overview of vaccines, both more traditional DNA vector vaccines and the advent of the mass production of mRNA vaccines. Contraindications and adverse reactions to vaccines are also described.

Appropriately, the authors devote a major portion of their overview to what is known about the effective management of children who present to their clinician with COVID-19 infection. The authors include the observation that, similar to adults with COVID-19 infection, children with other chronic health conditions (e.g., obesity, diabetes) are at risk for more severe illness. Finally, the authors point out the important advocacy role local clinicians have played and will continue to play during this pandemic. Respected local clinician community leaders have advocated for timely vaccination and the wide spread use of masks in schools to help keep children safe, well and in the classroom.

Dr. Schaffzin’s commentary includes a detailed list of the entire “bundle” or group of prevention strategies that are effective to prevent COVID-19 infection as well as other viral infections.² They are: masking, distancing, hand hygiene, staying home if ill and avoiding other ill people, as well as vaccinations. He notes that “we have learned to pivot, how to remain resilient and effective” during the pandemic and he urges readers to employ this volume to “understand current state (of the pandemic) and be enabled to handle the shifts as they inevitably occur”.

References

1. Burkhardt MC, Winter K, Alter SJ, Klatte JM. A COVID-19 Overview for Primary Care Clinicians. *Curr Probl Pediatr Adolesc Health Care* 2022;52(4):101205.
2. Schaffzin JK. Primary Care and COVID – Opportunities Abound. *Curr Probl Pediatr Adolesc Health Care* 2022;52(4):101198.

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