
Book Reviews

Measles Eradication Field Guide: PAHO Technical Paper No. 41. *Pan American Health Organization 1999.

In 1994 the Ministers of Health for the Americas adopted the laudable and ambitious goal of eradicating measles from the Western Hemisphere by the year 2000. This optimistic ambition followed the successful eradication of polio from the Americas and the recent successful interruption of measles virus circulation in the Caribbean and Latin America by a new approach to vaccination. Building upon the recent success in these countries the PAHO have issued this technical paper to assist other countries, mainly in the developing world, to improve their measles vaccination record.

This guide assimilates the experience gained through this programme and emphasizes the importance of enhanced surveillance, special immunization campaigns, mop-up operations and rapid responses to outbreaks. It contains useful brief reviews on epidemiology, differential clinical diagnosis, measles vaccines, eradication strategy, surveillance and laboratory tests.

In general this is a useful publication although some of the figures could be more clearly annotated and some of the jargon used could be confusing for readers whose first language is not English. The section on clinical diagnosis contains good clear pictures of classical measles rash, but in fair skinned children. As most children now at risk are dark skinned and rash is difficult to see in them it would have been more helpful to include pictures of Koplik's spots and expand the section describing them.

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The Fungal Colony. Eds. N. A. R. Gow, G. D. Robson and G. M. Gadd. Cambridge University Press 1999. £65.00. ISBN 0 521 62117 8 (hardback).

The Fungal Colony is the 21st Volume in the British Mycological Society Symposium series which strives to

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present comprehensive reviews of important topics in mycology. This new volume is dedicated to the analysis of the filamentous life style and, in particular, to a review of new data on hyphae in relation to the fungal mycelial colony. The authors chosen to submit chapters are authorities in the field although from an international perspective there are perhaps rather too many UK contributors.

The main themes tackled include intracellular transport and signalling, cellular recognition processes, the value of regulated polarized growth and the response of the fungal cell to a heterogeneous environment. The first four chapters cover aspects of the properties of mycelia, particularly in relation to their response to the environment (signalling and sensing are particularly well dealt with). Chapters 5 and 6 deal with metabolism and growth (Chapter 5 has a particularly good coverage of enzyme production), while Chapter 7 deals with mycelial branching and the mechanisms that regulate it. Chapter 8 deals with stress responses triggered by the presence of toxic metals, while Chapters 9 and 10 cover recent work on the molecular analysis of events such as tip growth and branching. The final chapters present comprehensive coverage of the methods employed in exchange of genetic information.

I particularly enjoyed the chapters on circadian rhythms (Chapter 4) and on mating and sexual interactions in fungal mycelia (Chapter 11), though all the chapters were of a high standard. The quality of illustrations throughout the book are uniformly high and each chapter comes with a detailed and very useful bibliography. My only real criticism is that the main subject index at the end of the volume is not as comprehensive as it might be. Apart from this minor drawback, the text as a whole represents a considerable contribution to the study of the fungal mycelial colony and it provides a valuable source of reference to the bench scientist as well as providing a worthy introduction to the field for the uninitiated.

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