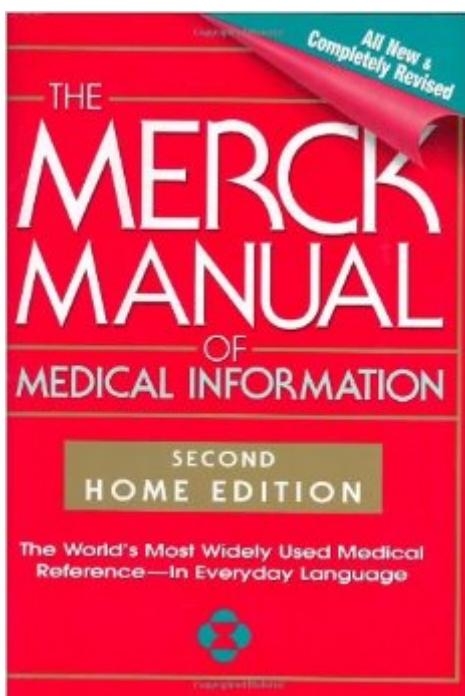


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# The Merck Manual Of Medical Information, Second Edition: The World's Most Widely Used Medical Reference - Now In Everyday Language



## **Synopsis**

For the past twenty years the publishers of THE MERCK MANUAL, one of the most widely used sources of medical information in the world, realised that more and more copies of the guide were being purchased by people who were not healthcare professionals, despite the fact that it had never been advertised and was not written for public use. Recognising the public's increasing need for access to the same medical information doctors have, Merck responded with the HOME EDITION. This contained virtually all the information in the physician's version, but in easy-to-understand, everyday language, with a reader-friendly format. Since its publication three years ago the HOME EDITION has gone on to sell more than 2 million copies worldwide. Now Merck have updated the edition to cater for the changing medical environment. The new edition contains 35 new chapters on subjects ranging from Gene Therapy and the warning signs of cancer to biological warfare and terrorism and with 64 new illustrations and colour plates along with new tables on emerging drugs, THE MERCK MANUAL is the only home reference guide all health conscious readers will need.

## **Book Information**

Series: Merck Manual Home Health Handbook

Hardcover: 1900 pages

Publisher: Merck; 2 edition (April 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0911910352

ISBN-13: 978-0911910353

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 6.9 x 2 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (76 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #137,237 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Reference #111 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Medicine > Clinical > Internal Medicine #124 in Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Medical

## **Customer Reviews**

Compared to other medical references available in the market such as American Medical Assoc, Harvard's, Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic or British Medical Assoc medical / family health guides, etc. the Merck's Manual is definitely the best and the most complete & informative. With contributions from around 300 medical experts, no other guide comes close to it in terms of quality, readability and

relevance. However, this 1940-page awesome piece of work can yet be further improved. That's why I'm not giving it a full 5-STAR rating. One feature that can be added to this Medical Manual are a series of FLOW CHARTS with cross-referencing for the readers to "diagnose" their symptoms, complications etc. Doesn't have to be too many - probably around 100 symptom charts would do. These decision diagrams would be quicker and easier to use than the Index. The ones found in British MA Family Doctor Home Advisor and Harvard's Family Health Guide are very good examples. Secondly, the editors should use the METRIC SYSTEM for measurement units e.g. temperature in Celsius (with Fahrenheit in brackets), weight in kilograms, metres (or centimetres) for height, etc. so that everybody around the world can enjoy reading those knowledge-packed pages without having to convert and carry a calculator every time. Thirdly, some COLOUR CODINGS (or thumb index) should be helpful for easier referencing since the book contains over 300 chapters. At least, we don't have to refer to the Appendix or Content Page too often. If colour codings are too expensive, shades of grey, light red (as in the diagrams) etc. should still be acceptable.

This reference book is easy to use and understand. When I first leaned of this home edition version of the Merck manual I was hesitant. Over the years many books have been published that are medical in nature, some published by doctors, but the content is watered down or so vague that a layperson doesn't derive much information from it. Some books are actually condescending in attitude, some patronizing. So many books briefly skim symptoms and then caution to call a physician for more information. My son was diagnosed on the phone by our pediatrician with chicken pox and it was made clear that they did not want to see him for a physical exam. I was given a tiny bit of information by the office staff but was still curious for more information. I spent over an hour surfing the Internet looking for information but found watered down information, repeated many times over on multiple websites, including some written by physicians intended for laypeople to use. I looked at my parenting books written by doctors (one titled "The Portable Pediatrician") and was still lacking any substantial information. But when I consulted the Merck Manual home edition, (which I had forgotten I bought recently and had not yet used), I was surprised at the level of information given. There are many details that I had not found elsewhere, such as number of days from exposure to outbreak, how long it takes the pox to change from first appearance to crusted over, about how long the infection lasts, and treatment suggestions. Reasons why some children have a mild outbreak vs. a severe outbreak were even provided, something I had not found anywhere else. The information here is not dumbed down in that it is not so vague that it is not useful.

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