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The third edition of Therapeutic Guidelines: Dermatology provides a valuable resource for general practitioners, general practice registrars and other doctors-in-training. The book is well organised into disease categories covered in succinct chapters, facilitating its use as a quick reference guide for busy medical professionals.

The chapter on ‘getting to know your drugs’ is a concise summary of the numerous available prescribed and over-the-counter medicines used in current practice. Helpfully, it outlines the most suitable therapeutic preparation to use (for instance ointments, gels, lotions) for a particular skin disease.

The skin disorders commonly encountered in practice by the target medical audience are covered in thorough detail. The chapters on acne, psoriasis, dermatitis, hair disorders and nail disorders comprise stepwise treatment plans based on best practice guidelines that are easy to follow, while also providing an appropriate refresher summary on pathogenesis and classification. In keeping with the times, a chapter is dedicated to the ever evolving discipline of cosmetic dermatology, delivering relevant insights into the therapeutic options available in this field.

A limitation of the book is the absence of visual images. Dermatology is to a considerable extent a visual science and accordingly, the inclusion of a set of images to illustrate a number of the conditions would have been useful. Although the guidelines do not seek to fill the role of a dermatological atlas, visual aide memoires for less commonly encountered, unusual or frequently misdiagnosed disorders would have been a beneficial addition. The chapter on dermatological emergencies, blistering disorders and connective tissue disorders in particular, could have benefited from such a visual approach.

Overall, the book is a worthy addition to the therapeutic guidelines library. It is sufficiently detailed and offers a methodical approach for the management of dermatological disorders. I would recommend it as a valuable resource to the readers of Australian Prescriber.