

BOOK REVIEW

Delirium: Prevention, Symptoms and Treatment

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This text is timely, important, and much-needed by clinicians, researchers, and even healthcare system administrators. The incidence, prevalence, morbidity, mortality, effects of persistence/recurrence, and costs of delirium are under-estimated and always breathtaking. There are few resources devoted to delirium assessment and management that are consolidated into a single source. “Delirium: Prevention, Symptoms and Treatment” is destined to rapidly become a staple in the libraries of all physicians and allied practitioners who work in inpatient medical-surgical settings and chronic care settings. As the age of the population increases, with associated development of more and more delirium risk factors, the need to prevent and manage delirium will be increasingly important. This textbook is right on time.

Dr. Bourgeois has assembled a diverse group of authors and experts, and has woven the broadly constructed topics together into an impressive tapestry of work that covers the wide territory of delirium considerations, including analysis of assessment and treatment considerations by delirium subgroup. Chapters focus on basic topics like classification, neuropsychological assessment, diagnosis, prevention and intervention. There are outstanding descriptions of patient/family interviewing, examination pearls, and biopsychosocial approaches—broadly addressing the roles and impacts of delirium on patients, their families, health care providers and teams, and on systems of care.

In this text, the evaluation of delirium patients and patients at risk for delirium is comprehensively but practically covered. There are chapters that drill down on key medical units that continually manage delirium patients, including general medical wards, post-surgical units, critical care settings, pediatric units, and addiction treatment settings. Legal issues related to delirium are effectively laid out, including capacity, consent, discharge planning and medical assistance with dying considerations. It is refreshing to see pediatric delirium addressed in a clear and practical way for generalists—the multiple unique considerations of pediatric patients and their families are presented in ways that can be managed by non-child-trained providers.

A most unique feature of this textbook is how prevention approaches are conceptualized as primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Clinicians who approach their populations and health systems with this conceptual model will find plenty of help here and are certain to be more effective clinicians, better stewards of health care resources, and more effective advocates for attention to delirium by health system leaders.

Dr. Bourgeois and his colleagues have produced a seminal textbook that will become a mainstay of clinical and teaching reference. It is a high-quality, evidence-based work that is presented in a practical and clinically-focused manner. It will be an office textbook favorite across a broad band of medical, surgical, primary care and psychiatric health care providers.

Review by **James R. Rundell**, M.D.