Pocket Guide to

CLINICAL MICROBIOLOGY

3RD EDITION
Pocket Guide to CLINICAL MICROBIOLOGY

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To Melissa and David for their patient support and loving understanding while we labored with this project
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Preface

Writing is an art of organizing and refining information. The challenge for authors is to identify what is important and express it in a coherent, logical manner. By its nature, a pocket guide is a condensation of many disparate facts. This makes the challenge more daunting — what information should be included and excluded, and how can it be logically presented without creating a book that expands beyond the limits of a lab coat pocket? This is the third edition of the *Pocket Guide to Clinical Microbiology*. The genesis of this series sprang from the observation that our clinical colleagues were never far removed from an assortment of pocket-sized reference texts that they used to confirm clinical diagnoses and treatment options. Like our colleagues, clinical microbiologists must constantly make decisions — about the choice of diagnostic tests such as culture, detection of microbial antigens or serologic responses, and genome-based approaches; how to collect, transport, and process specimens; and what methods should be used to identify an isolated organism and determine its susceptibility to a spectrum of antimicrobial agents. A number of good reference texts exist that can guide the clinical microbiologist (refer to the Bibliography of this pocket guide), but these volumes are hardly pocket-size. Hence, the first edition of this text was born. As with most projects of this nature, each subsequent edition is a refinement of the previous. In this third edition, both the content and the organization have been modified. Some of these changes are transparent, others are obvious. The most obvious change is the addition of a second author, Yvonne R. Shea, who has assumed responsibilities for the mycology and mycobacteriology sections of the *Pocket Guide*. Another obvious change is that we have reorganized the diagnostic sections. In the previous two editions, specimen processing, organism isolation and identification, and immunodiagnostic testing were in separate sections. In this edition we have combined this information into separate diagnostic sections for bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. We hope the readers will find this more useful. We have also carefully updated the information presented in this text, using as our guide the published
literature and available reference texts, particularly the eighth edition of the Manual of Clinical Microbiology and other ASM publications. Obviously, not all information can be incorporated into this pocket guide. Rather, we hope the readers will use this text as the beginning and not the end. It should serve as a quick reference. The users of this pocket guide should refer to the available reference books for a more expansive coverage of the topics presented here. For your additional convenience, the Pocket Guide is now available via ASM Press in PDA format.

As with any project of this nature, there are many people who should be thanked. We have been fortunate to work with many excellent clinical microbiologists at Washington University, the University of Maryland, and the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center, as well as colleagues in many national and international laboratories. Special thanks go to colleagues from the editorial board of the Manual of Clinical Microbiology (Ellen Jo Baron, Jim Jorgensen, Mike Pfaller, and Bob Yolken) and Davide Larone, who graciously allowed us to borrow heavily from her text, Medically Important Fungi, a Guide to Identification. We also thank once more the staff at ASM Press, particularly Susan Birch and Jeff Holtmeier. Without their efforts, encouragement, and patience, this pocket guide would never have been possible. Finally, we thank all those who have offered suggestions for improving the Pocket Guide to Clinical Microbiology. We hope this effort will not fall short of their expectations.

Patrick R. Murray
Yvonne R. Shea
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