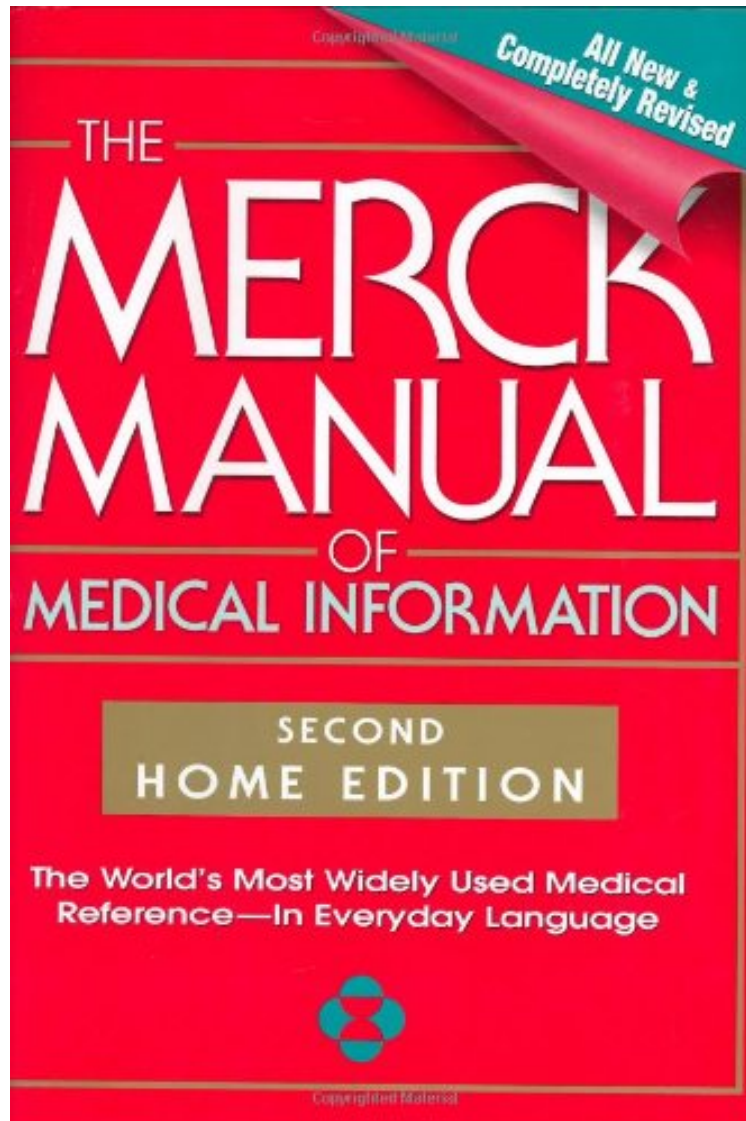


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Mark H. Beers

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From Publishers WeeklyThe second edition of this very valuable resource has all the attributes of the first. Written for the layperson, articles are clear, comprehensive and detailed. There are excellent charts and illustrations to further make the material more understandable. Almost every conceivable medical condition is covered, with additional chapters that highlight women's, men's and children's health issues; specific information is also provided on the aging body. According to the editors, the content has been expanded to cover medical treatments or advances that have occurred since 1997, when the first edition was published. The editors have included new drug options for HIV-positive patients, as well as a section on herbal supplements and their possible interactions with prescribed medications. Although the emphasis is on traditional medicine, there is an objective article on complementary and alternative medicine. Two appendices-"Drug Names: Generic and Trade" and "Resources for Help and Information"-will be particularly helpful to medical consumers. In addition, advice is given on preventative measures, such as the value of exercise and proper nutrition. An excellent resource for any home. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistThe Merck Manual, now in its seventeenth edition, has been a standard medical reference source for over 100 years. The first home edition, published in 1997 and translated into 12 languages, was a welcome addition to consumer health reference collections. Just as librarians begin to worry about its age, Merck has released a second home edition. The editors have completely revised and rewritten the manual, adding a great deal of new material in the process. All of the editors, contributors, and editorial board members are physicians or academics with doctorates.The format of the book has not changed. A detailed table of contents lists 25 sections divided into chapters. The first, "Fundamentals," explains basic anatomy and physiology, the aging process, fitness, communicating with health professionals, and legal and ethical issues. The others cover specific organs, systems, diseases and disorders, drugs, and first aid. The sections dealing with organs and systems begin with the biology of the system and then explain the symptoms, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of diseases that may affect it. There are color diagrams of relevant anatomy as well as an eight-page insert of anatomical charts. This new edition has added material on violence against women, sexual dysfunction, chromosomal and genetic abnormalities in children, and travel health. The drug section now includes information about medicinal herbs and nutraceuticals and their interactions with other drugs. A new section called "Special Subjects" covers medical decision making, surgery, complementary and alternative medicine, amyloidosis, familial Mediterranean fever, and diseases of unknown origin. A series of appendixes contains information on weights and measures, common tests, generic and trade names of drugs, and resources for referrals.Although it has fewer, less colorful illustrations than the American College of Physicians Complete Home Medical Guide (DK, 1999) and lacks the flow charts of The Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide (Simon Schuster, 1999), The Merck Manual of Medical Information continues to provide the most current, detailed medical information in a format and language that lay readers will understand at a reasonable price. Libraries owning the 1997 edition will want to update and the others will want to add this excellent resource to their consumer health reference collections. RBBCopyright American Library Association. All rights reservedAbout the AuthorCompiled by 200 internationally respected medical experts for Merck, the market leader in the field of medicine.