

Environmental
HEALTH
in Family Medicine



Introduction



Introduction

“Environmental Health in Family Medicine” is a set of modules based on clinical cases which can be used for self-learning, or for teaching residents or practicing physicians.

The six modules are designed to cover content areas important to family medicine and environmental health skills relevant to primary care. These content areas and skills were derived from a needs assessment of family physicians, and from a consensus process which included family physicians and experts in environmental and public health.

Each module covers one content area and emphasizes different environmental health skill sets. The modules are weighted toward the three skill sets considered core to family medicine: taking an exposure history, knowledge of resources and risk communication.

The following grid indicates the relative emphasis of each module on a 1-5 scale: for example, the lead module emphasizes skills of taking an exposure history, utilization of lab tests, toxicology and risk communication.

Skill Sets

Modules	Exposure Hx.	Exp./Risk Assessment	Env. Health Epidemiology	Lab Utilization	Toxicology	Knowledge of Resources	Risk Communication
Lead	*****	**	**	****	****	***	****
Outdoor Air Quality	**	***	**	**	**	****	
Indoor Air Quality	****	*	**	**	***	****	
Pesticides	***	***	*	***	****	**	****
Clusters of Disease (Water Quality)	***	**	*****	**	*	****	**
Persistent Organic Pollutants (PCB'S)	****	***	**	****	**	*****	

Introduction(cont.)

Each module has objectives, clinical cases which illustrate environmental health skills and at-risk groups, a discussion of the cases, background information for teachers, references including websites, and proposed exam questions covering core content of each module.

The cases cover all age groups, and focus on the relevant at-risk groups for a particular exposure. The following is a guide for selecting cases by age group or at-risk group:

Pediatric Cases : Every module has at least one pediatric case. Lead, indoor and outdoor air quality, pesticides and PCB's have particular emphasis on effects in children.

Adult Cases: Lead, indoor air, pesticides, clusters-water quality and PCB's have adult cases. Cases in the lead, pesticide and PCB modules have content about reproductive health effects.

Geriatric Cases: The pesticide module includes one geriatric case, and a discussion on environmental health effects in the elderly.

This curriculum can also be downloaded free from the following websites:

International Joint Commission : www.ijc.org/boards/health.html

Ontario College of Family Physicians: www.cfpc.ca/ocfp/

For more information please contact the authors:

Dr. Alan Abelson: alan.abelson@utoronto.ca

or Dr. Marg Sanborn : msanborn@log.on.ca