

## BOOK REVIEW

**Srinivasan, H.** *Prevention of Disabilities in Patients with Leprosy*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 1993. Softbound, viii + 140 pp., black and white illustrations, available in English; French and Spanish in preparation). ISBN 92-4-154456-2. Sw.fr.29/US\$26.10 (in developing countries Sw.fr.20.30. Order no. 1150401 from: World Health Organization, Distribution and Sales, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland.

This book is a practical guide for peripheral health workers to help them to assess the risk of disability in leprosy patients, treat cases effectively, and teach patients how to prevent disabilities and deformities. The manual uses simple language supported by tables, charts, checklists, and some 100 illustrations to help readers absorb information and acquire the full range of necessary skills.

The first section explains the consequences of leprosy, and describes the goals and aims of a disability prevention program. The second section, devoted to prevention of secondary impairments of hands and feet and preservation of nerve function, addresses the assessment and treatment of patients. Instructions for assessment are

presented through questions to ask, signs to observe, and tests to carry out, followed by a detailed disability assessment chart and examples of how the chart works in practice. The section on treatment provides step-by-step instructions on the treatment of conditions at the peripheral level, and includes exercises that patients can practice at home. The guide also offers advice on instructing and training patients in disability prevention and monitoring and supporting them. Throughout, emphasis is placed on the importance of community participation, the use of a disability assessment chart to monitor results, and the need to refer disability problems that cannot be handled at the local level.

Contents include: Chapter 1. Consequences of leprosy; Chapter 2. Nerve trunk involvement and its consequences; Chapter 3. Disability prevention; Chapter 4. Preventing damage to insensitive hands; Chapter 5. Preventing damage to insensitive feet; Chapter 6. Preserving nerve function; Chapter 7. Instructing and training patients in disability prevention; Chapter 8. Monitoring and supporting patients. —WHO New Book Announcement.