

**TAKE IT TO HEART (video)**

Coronary care unit, Rotherham General Hospitals (1994)  
Running time 12 minutes. Price £21.99

The emphasis of health promotion in general practice is shifting towards more structured care for high-risk groups, such as patients with angina. Recent work has shown that personal education can help patients with this condition adopt healthy lifestyles. This video, produced by Rotherham National Health Service Trust, aims to provide information to sufferers on how to cope with angina, and to others on how to avoid it.

Its format is an authoritative voice-over with parallel video footage illustrating, for example, healthy eating choices. About a third of the video is devoted to general messages about minimizing risk factors. The remainder includes the aetiology of coronary heart disease and the treatments available, although surprisingly no mention is made of aspirin. Aspects such as work, driving and sexual activity are covered, albeit superficially. The focus of this section is a middle-aged man who is seen suffering an attack of angina, taking glyceryl trinitrate prophylactically before exercise, and so on. Rather disconcertingly, the video ends with him gripping his chest in severe pain while his wife telephones for an ambulance, although the term heart attack is not used.

One short video cannot address both sufferers and those interested in preventing angina, as the needs of each group are quite different. This video may have a place in informing patients newly diagnosed as having angina, serving as a stimulus for discussion at further consultations. I suspect, however, that many doctors and patients will prefer the more traditional and cheaper written material.

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**COUNSELLING IN A GENERAL PRACTICE SETTING**

James Breese

Central Book Publishing Ltd, London (1994)  
84 pages. Price £8.99

The past 10 years have seen a steady growth in the number of counsellors working alongside general practitioners in surgeries. James Breese is one such counsellor who works in a Norwich general practice.

*Counselling in a general practice setting* is intended to be an introduction to general practice based counselling and is aimed at both prospective counsellors and general practitioners. In five short chapters, Breese discusses issues such as the referral of patients for counselling, his own experience in Norwich and the thorny question as to whether counselling works. I particularly liked his account of the development of his own counselling service and he also explains well the practicalities of counselling in primary care. It was refreshing to see him quote the opinions of general practitioners at length. The bulk of the text, however, is of uneven quality. His discussion of the question 'does counselling in the surgery work?' is superficial and does not discuss in enough detail the problems surrounding the evaluation of counselling.

The strength of this text lies in Breese's own account of his work. Unfortunately, I cannot recommend it as an introduction to counselling. Quite simply there are several other recently published texts which better deal with the topic.

TIM STOKES

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**MRCGP EXAMINATION**

The dates and venues for the October/December 1995 diet of the MRCGP examination are as follows:

Written papers: Tuesday 24 October 1995 at centres in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Cardiff, Belfast, Dublin, Liverpool, Ripon, Birmingham, Bristol, Sennelager and Riyadh.

Oral examinations: In Edinburgh on Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 December. In London on Wednesday 6, Thursday 7, Friday 8, Saturday 9 and Monday 11 December.

The closing date for the receipt of completed applications is **Friday 1 September 1995**.

MRCGP is an additional registrable qualification and provides evidence of competence in child health surveillance for accreditation.

Further information and application forms are available from:

Examination Department,  
Royal College of General Practitioners,  
14 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PU

Telephone: 0171-581 3232.

Fax: 0171-225 3047

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