

Foreword



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“Children are not just little adults.” This simple phrase likely could be considered the unofficial motto of pediatric emergency physicians around the world. The phrase has been uttered countless times by those who are involved in teaching pediatrics and pediatric emergency medicine, and it is hard to imagine that any medical student has graduated in the past several decades without hearing the phrase. There is wisdom within the meaning of the phrase: children are well known to present with atypical presentations of common diseases, their size and physiology warrant alterations in drug dosages, and there are certain diseases that occur almost exclusively in youth. Children, therefore, must not be approached, worked up, or treated like adults.

But just as children are not little adults, neonates and newborns are not just little children! Children in the first months and first year of life represent the extreme in terms of their atypical presentations, altered physiology, and distinctive diseases. Certain unique endocrine, metabolic, and cardiac emergencies occur in the newborn period. The approach to hyperbilirubinemia in neonates is far different than the approach to hyperbilirubinemia at any other time of life. Abdominal emergencies such as pyloric stenosis and mid-gut volvulus occur almost exclusively in the first months of life. Resuscitation issues are distinctive in the first month of life as well, so much so that neonatal resuscitation and Neonatal Advanced Life Support courses are taught at many institutions based on the model of the American Heart Association’s Pediatric Advanced Life Support course.

In this issue of *Emergency Medicine Clinics of North America*, Drs. Sharieff and Colletti have assembled an outstanding group of experts in pediatric emergency medicine to address acute care of children in the first year of life. The editors and authors have addressed high risk conditions of the major organ systems and common presentations that may harbor catastrophic illnesses. The reader will undoubtedly find the articles chock-full of pearls to improve practice and pitfalls to avoid. Kudos go to the editors and authors for providing us an outstanding resource to improve our practice and the care of this often perplexing patient population.

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