As practicing pediatricians, we encounter patients with varied disorders and an ever-expanding body of knowledge and information that is accessible at our fingertips. The amount of information is such that no single individual can master even a fraction of it. Thus, it is imperative for us to have a guide, a path that can help us navigate this knowledge base. As a pediatric hematologist and oncologist who was trained under the late Dr. Frank A. Oski and Dr. James A. Stockman, III, who were both at SUNY Upstate Medical Center, I learned the importance of a practical approach to problems that can help us care for our patients in a simple and logical way.

In this issue of Pediatric Annals, I have asked a group of colleagues to help us navigate some of the most frequent hematological problems we encounter in the day-to-day practice of pediatrics. The issue is organized by how frequently the question comes to my attention in clinical settings.

In the first article, “A General Pediatrician’s Approach to Anemia in Childhood,” Dr. Amber M. D’Souza provides not only one, but several ways to look at anemia in childhood. Whether you choose to look at anemia based on pathophysiology or morphology, she provides us with useful algorithm-driven approaches. In the second article, “Leukocyte-Related Disorders: A Review for the Pediatrician,” Dr. Brinda Mehta provides an overarching approach to neutrophils. The article also briefly explores monocytes, macrophages, lymphocytes, eosinophils, and basophils. Next, Dr. Prerna Kumar in the article, “The General Pediatrician’s Guide to Isolated Thrombocytopenia,” covers thrombocytopenia, both the common disorders and those uncommon. She provides us with algorithms based on the health status and age of patients, an approach that I find very useful. Then, in the article “Evaluation of Abnormal Bleeding in Children,” Dr. Jonathan C. Roberts helps us decide when a child with bruises or nosebleeds has a bleeding disorder. In some patients with severe hereditary bleeding disorders, the question is not as hard. However, for the practicing pediatrician who may see a 2-year-old boy present full of bruises, the question becomes a real practical problem. This is a common and vexing challenge that we hope Dr. Roberts’ article will make easier for clinicians to manage. Finally, in the article “Sickle Cell Disease: A Primer for Primary Care Providers,” Drs. Sabrina Kimrey and Kay L. Saving provide a logical approach to the care of children with sickle cell disease. They have also included some of the great advances and future therapies for this disease that are on the horizon.

I hope the articles are easy to read, enjoyable, and helpful. We mean for them to be a practical compendium of “how to” articles rather than theoretical, pathophysiological articles. We hope to provide you with tools to diagnose your patients, care for them, and, when appropriate, refer them to specialists.

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