

Where There Is No Doctor a village health care handbook

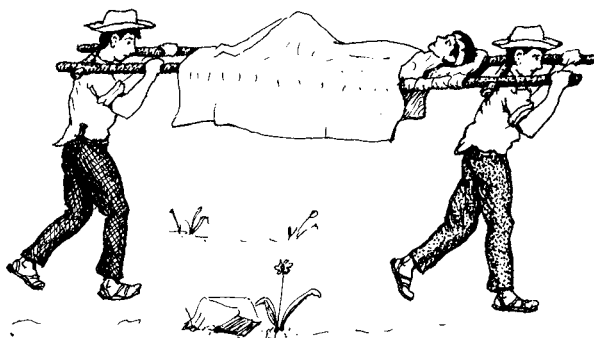
~ revised edition ~

by

David Werner

with

Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell



with drawings by David Werner



Published by:
Hesperian Health Guides
1919 Addison St., #304
Berkeley, California 94704 USA
www.hesperian.org

Copyright © 1977, 1992, 2013, 2017 by Hesperian
First English edition: October 1977
Revised English edition: May 1992
Fifteenth printing: November 2017
ISBN: 978-0-942364-15-6

The original English version of this book was produced in 1977 as a revised translation of the Spanish edition, *Donde no hay doctor*.

Hesperian encourages you to copy, reproduce, or adapt any or all parts of this book, including the illustrations, provided that you do this for non-commercial purposes, credit Hesperian, and follow the other requirements of **Hesperian's Open Copyright License** (see www.hesperian.org/about/open-copyright).

For certain kinds of adaptation and distribution, we ask that you first obtain permission from Hesperian. Contact permissions@hesperian.org to use any part of this book for commercial purposes; in quantities more than 100 print copies; in any digital format; or with an organizational budget more than US\$1 million.

We also ask that you contact Hesperian for permission **before beginning any translation**, to avoid duplication of efforts, and for suggestions about adapting the information in this book. Please send Hesperian a copy of any materials in which text or illustrations from this book have been used.

**THIS REVISED EDITION
CAN BE IMPROVED WITH
YOUR HELP.**

If you are a community health worker, doctor, parent, or anyone with ideas or suggestions for ways this book could be changed to better meet the needs of your community, please write to Hesperian at the above address. Thank you for your help.

This book has been printed in Canada by Friesens, an employee-owned corporation, on 30% post-consumer, chlorine-free, recycled paper.



Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Library of Congress has already cataloged the 10-digit ISBN as follows:

Werner, David, 1934-

Where there is no doctor: a village health care handbook
by David Werner; with Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell-Rev. ed.

Includes Index.

ISBN 0-942364-15-5

1. Medicine, Popular. 2. Rural health. I. Thuman, Carol, 1959-. II. Maxwell, Jane, 1941-. III Title.

[DNLM: 1. Community Health Aides-handbooks. 2. Medicine-popular works. 3. Rural Health-handbooks. WA 39 W492W]

RC81.W4813 1992 610-dc20

DNLM/DLC

92-1539



Thanks to the work and dedication of many groups and individuals around the world, *Where There Is No Doctor* has been translated into more than 80 languages. The following are some of the translations and the addresses where you can obtain them.



**SPANISH, HAITIAN KREYOL,
PORTUGUESE, FRENCH, and ENGLISH
and other language editions are available from:**

Hesperian Health Guides

1919 Addison St., #304 • Berkeley, California 94704 • USA
store.hesperian.org • bookorders@hesperian.org
tel: (1-510) 845-4507 • fax: (1-510) 845-0539

ARABIC:

Arab Resource Collective
5th Floor, Dakeek Bldg.
Emile Eddeh (Leon) St., Hamra
P.O. Box 13-5916
Beirut, LEBANON
www.mawared.org

SWAHILI:

Vinay Choudary, Spice Net Tanzania
PO Box 14508
16th Floor, PPF Towers
Ohio Street, Dar es Salaam
TANZANIA
vinay@spicenet.co.tz

INDONESIAN:

Yayasan Essentia Medica
PO Box 1058
Yogyakarta 55010
INDONESIA

TAMIL:

Adaiyaalam Publishing Group
1205/1 Karupur Salai
Thiruchirappali District
Puthanatham, Tamil Nadu, 621310
INDIA

KHMER:

OUM Bunnary Distribution
Siem Reap
CAMBODIA
www.wtind-khmer.blogspot.com
tha.nary@yahoo.com

URDU:

Pakistan Forum on Women's Health
PMA House, Aga Khan III Road
Garden West, Karachi 74400
PAKISTAN

Please write to Hesperian or look on our website, for other editions including Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Aymara, Azeri, Bambara, Bengali, Burmese, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Creole, Croatian, Dari, Farsi, Filipino, French, Fulfulde, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Iban, Ibatan, Ilocano, Ilongo, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Jinghpaw, Kannada, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Khmer, Kirundi, Korean, Kwangali, Kyrgyz, Lao, Malagasy, Malayalam, Marathi, Miskito, Mongolian, Nepali, Oriya, Oshivambo, Pashto, Pidgin, Portuguese, Quechua, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Shan, Shuar, Sindhi, Sinhala, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Telegu, Tetum, Thai, Tibetan, Tigrinya, Tswana, Turkish, Turkman, Tzotzil, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese, and Wolof, as well as other English editions adapted for specific countries.

We are looking for ways to get this book to those it can serve best. If you are able to help or have suggestions, please contact Hesperian.

THANKS

This revision of ***Where There Is No Doctor*** has been a cooperative effort. We thank the many users of the book around the world who have written us over the years with comments and suggestions—these have guided us in updating this information.

David Werner is the author of the original Spanish and English versions of the book. His vision, caring, and commitment are present on every page. Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell share credit for most of the research, writing, and preparation of this revised version. We are deeply grateful for their excellent and very careful work.

Thanks also to other researchers of this revised edition: Suellen Miller, Susan Klein, Ronnie Lovich, Mary Ellen Guroy, Shelley Kahane, Paula Elster, and George Kent. For information from the African edition, our thanks to Andrew Pearson and the other authors at Macmillan Publishers.

Many doctors and health care specialists from around the world generously reviewed portions of the book. We cannot list them all here, but the help of the following was exceptional: David Sanders, Richard Laing, Bill Bower, Greg Troll, Deborah Bickel, Tom Frieden, Jane Zucker, David Morley, Frank Catchpool, Lonny Shavelson, Rudolph Bock, Joseph Cook, Sadjia Greenwood, Victoria Sheffield, Sherry Hilaski, Pam Zinkin, Fernando Viteri, Jordan Tapero, Robert Gelber, Ted Greiner, Stephen Gloyd, Barbara Mintzes, Rainer Arnhold, Michael Tan, Brian Linde, Davida Coady, and Alejandro de Avila. Their expert advice and help have been of great value.

We warmly thank the dedicated members of Hesperian for their help in preparing the manuscript: Kyle Craven for computer graphic arts and layout, Stephen Babb and Cynthia Roat for computer graphics, and Lisa de Avila for editorial assistance. We are also grateful to many others who helped in this book's preparation: Kathy Alberts, Mary Klein, Evan Winslow-Smith, Jane Bavelas, Kim Gannon, Heidi Park, Laura Gibney, Nancy Ogaz, Martín Bustos, Karen Woodbury, and Trude Bock. Our special thanks to Keith and Luella McFarland for being there when we needed them most.

For help updating this book, we thank Manisha Aryal, Elizabeth Babu, Kristen Cashmore, Marcos Burgos, Julie Cliff, Lynne Coen, Gopal Dabade, Kathy DeRemier, Dan Eisenberg, Pam Fadem, George Feldman, Virginia Feldman, Iñaki Fernández de Retana, Shu Ping Guan, Matthew Heberger, Todd Jailer, Sunil Kaul, Lisa Keller, Robert Kimsey, Erika Leemann, Dick Litwin, Malcolm Lowe, Malini Mahendra, Jane Maxwell, Susan McCallister, Gail McSweeney, Elena Metcalf, Carrie Milnes, Syema Muzaffar, Leana Rosetti, Lora Santiago, David Scollard, C. Sienkiewicz, Maia Small, Peter Small, Melissa Smith, Linda Spangler, Sri Ranga Priya Srinivasan, Fred Strauss, Kathleen Tandy, Dorothy Tegeler, Michael Terry, Fiona Thomson, Leah Uberseder, Kathleen Vickery, Lily Walkover, Sarah Wallis, Curt Wands and Paula Worby. Todd Jailer coordinated this 2017 reprint with help from Kathleen Tandy.

Artwork for this book was created by David Werner, Kyle Craven, Susan Klein, Regina Doyle, Sandy Frank, Kathleen Tandy, Fiona Thomson, Lihua Wang, and Mary Ann Zapalac. We also thank the following persons and groups for permission to use their artwork: Dale Crosby, Carl Werner, Macmillan Publishers (for some of Felicity Shepherd's drawings in the African edition of this book), the "New Internationalist" (for the picture of the VIP latrine), James Ogwang (for the drawings on page 417), and McGraw-Hill (for drawings appearing on pages 85 and 104 taken from *Emergency Medical Guide* by John Henderson, illustrated by Neil Hardy).

The fine work of those who helped create the original version is still reflected on nearly every page. Our thanks to Val Price, Al Hotti, Kathleen Tandy, Max Capestany, Rudolf Bock, Kent Benedict, Alfonso Darricades, Carlos Felipe Soto Miller, Paul Quintana, David Morley, Bill Bower, Allison Orozco, Susan Klein, Greg Troll, Carol Westburg, Lynn Gordon, Myra Polinger, Trude Bock, Roger Buch, Lynne Coen, George Kent, Jack May, Oliver Bock, Bill Gonda, Ray Bleicher, and Jesús Manjárez.

We are grateful for financial support from the Carnegie Corporation, Flora Family Foundation, Ford Foundation, Grousebeck Family Foundation, Moriah Fund, Gladys and Merrill Muttart Foundation, Myra Polinger, the Public Welfare Foundation, Misereor, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Sunflower Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, and West Foundation.

Finally, our warm thanks to the village health workers of Project Piaxtla in rural Mexico — especially Martín Reyes, Miguel Angel Manjárez, Miguel Angel Alvarez, and Roberto Fajardo, whose experience and commitment provided the foundation for this book.

Contents

A list of what is discussed in each chapter

INTRODUCTION

NOTE ABOUT THIS NEW EDITION

WORDS TO THE VILLAGE HEALTH WORKER (Brown Pages)w1

- Health Needs and Human Needs **w2**
- Many Things Relate to Health Care **w7**
- Take a Good Look at Your Community **w8**
- Using Local Resources to Meet Needs **w12**
- Deciding What to Do and Where to Begin **w13**
- Trying a New Idea **w15**
- A Balance Between People and Land **w16**
- A Balance Between Prevention and Treatment **w17**
- Sensible and Limited Use of Medicines **w18**
- Finding Out What Progress Has Been Made **w20**
- Teaching and Learning Together **w21**
- Tools for Teaching **w22**
- Making the Best Use of This Book **w28**

Chapter 1

HOME CURES AND POPULAR BELIEFS 1

- Home Cures That Help **1**
- Beliefs That Can Make People Well **2**
- Beliefs That Can Make People Sick **4**
- Witchcraft—Black Magic—and the Evil Eye **5**
- Questions and Answers **6**
- Sunken Fontanel or Soft Spot **9**
- Ways to Tell Whether a Home Remedy Works or Not **10**
- Medicinal Plants **12**
- Homemade Casts—for Broken Bones **14**
- Enemas, Laxatives, and Purges **15**

Chapter 2

SICKNESSES THAT ARE OFTEN CONFUSED 17

- What Causes Sickness? **17**
- Different Kinds of Sicknesses and Their Causes **18**
- Non-infectious Diseases **18**
- Infectious Diseases **19**
- Sicknesses That Are Hard to Tell Apart **20**
- Example of Local Names for Sicknesses **22**
- Misunderstanding Due to Confusion of Names **25**
- Confusion between Different Illnesses That Cause Fever **26**

Chapter 3

HOW TO EXAMINE A SICK PERSON 29

- Questions **29**
- General Condition of Health **30**
- Temperature **30**
- How to Use a Thermometer **31**
- Breathing (Respiration) **32**
- Pulse (Heartbeat) **32**
- Eyes **33**
- Ears **34**
- Skin **34**
- The Belly (Abdomen) **35**
- Muscles and Nerves **37**

Chapter 4	
HOW TO TAKE CARE OF A SICK PERSON	39
The Comfort of the Sick Person	39
Special Care for a Person Who Is Very Ill	40
Liquids	40
Food	41
Cleanliness and Changing Position in Bed	41
Watching for Changes	41
Signs of Dangerous Illness	42
When and How to Look for Medical Help	43
What to Tell the Health Worker	43
Patient Report	44
Chapter 5	
HEALING WITHOUT MEDICINES	45
Healing with Water	46
When Water Is Better than Medicines	47
Chapter 6	
RIGHT AND WRONG USE OF MODERN MEDICINES	49
Guidelines for the Use of Medicine	49
The Most Dangerous Misuse of Medicine	50
When Should Medicine Not Be Taken?	54
Chapter 7	
ANTIBIOTICS: WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW TO USE THEM	55
Guidelines for the Use of Antibiotics	56
What to Do if an Antibiotic Does Not Seem to Help	57
Importance of Limited Use of Antibiotics	58
Chapter 8	
HOW TO MEASURE AND GIVE MEDICINE	59
Medicine in Liquid Form	61
How to Give Medicines to Small Children	62
How to Take Medicines	63
Dosage Instructions for Persons Who Cannot Read	63
Chapter 9	
INSTRUCTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS FOR INJECTIONS	65
When to Inject and When Not To	65
Emergencies When It Is Important to Give Injections	66
Medicines Not to Inject	67
Risks and Precautions	68
Dangerous Reactions From Injecting Certain Medicines	70
Avoiding Serious Reactions to Penicillin	71
How to Prepare a Syringe for Injection	72
How to Inject	73
How Injections Can Disable Children	74
How to Sterilize Equipment	74

Chapter 10

FIRST AID 75

- Basic Cleanliness and Protection **75**
- Fever **75**
- Shock **77**
- Loss of Consciousness **78**
- When Something Gets Stuck in the
Throat **79**
- Drowning **79**
- When Breathing Stops: Mouth-to-Mouth
Breathing **80**
- Emergencies Caused by Heat **81**
- How to Control Bleeding from a Wound **82**
- How to Stop Nosebleeds **83**
- Cuts, Scrapes, and Small Wounds **84**
- Large Cuts: How to Close Them **85**
- Bandages **87**

- Infected Wounds **88**
- Bullet, Knife, and Other Serious Wounds **90**
- Emergency Problems of the Gut
(Acute Abdomen) **93**
- Appendicitis, Peritonitis **94**
- Burns **96**
- Broken Bones (Fractures) **98**
- How to Move a Badly Injured Person **100**
- Dislocations
(Bones Out of Place at a Joint) **101**
- Strains and Sprains **102**
- Poisoning **103**
- Snakebite **104**
- Other Poisonous Bites and Stings **106**

Chapter 11

NUTRITION: WHAT TO EAT TO BE HEALTHY 107

- Sicknesses Caused by Not Eating Well **107**
- Why It Is Important to Eat Right **109**
- Preventing Malnutrition **109**
- Main Foods and Helper Foods **110**
- Eating Right to Stay Healthy **111**
- How to Recognize Malnutrition **112**
- Eating Better When You Do Not Have Much
Money or Land **115**
- Where to Get Vitamins: In Pills or
in Foods? **118**
- Things to Avoid in Our Diet **119**
- The Best Diet for Small Children **120**
- Harmful Ideas about Diet **123**

- Special Diets for Specific Health
Problems **124**
- Anemia **124**
- Rickets **125**
- High Blood Pressure **125**
- People Who Are Too Heavy **126**
- Constipation **126**
- Diabetes **127**
- Acid Indigestion, Heartburn, and Stomach
Ulcers **128**
- Goiter
(A Swelling or Lump on the Throat) **130**

Chapter 12

PREVENTION: HOW TO AVOID MANY SICKNESSES 131

- Cleanliness—and Problems from Lack
of Cleanliness **131**
- Basic Guidelines of Cleanliness **133**
- Sanitation and Latrines **137**
- Worms and Other Intestinal Parasites **140**
- Roundworm (Ascaris) **140**
- Pinworm (Threadworm, Enterobius) **141**
- Whipworm (Trichuris) **142**
- Hookworm **142**
- Tapeworm **143**

- Trichinosis **144**
- Amebas **144**
- Giardia **145**
- Blood Flukes
(Schistosomiasis, Bilharzia) **146**
- Vaccinations (Immunizations)—Simple,
Sure Protection **147**
- Other Ways to Prevent Sickness
and Injury **148**
- Habits That Affect Health **148**

Chapter 13

SOME VERY COMMON SICKNESSES 151

- Dehydration **151**
- Diarrhea and Dysentery **153**
- The Care of a Person with Acute Diarrhea **160**
- Vomiting **161**
- Headaches and Migraines **162**
- Colds and the Flu **163**
- Stuffy and Runny Noses **164**
- Sinus Trouble (Sinusitis) **165**
- Hay Fever (Allergic Rhinitis) **165**
- Allergic Reactions **166**
- Asthma **167**
- Cough **168**
- Bronchitis **170**
- Pneumonia **171**
- Hepatitis **172**
- Arthritis (Painful, Inflamed Joints) **173**
- Back Pain **173**
- Varicose Veins **175**
- Piles (Hemorrhoids) **175**
- Swelling of the Feet and Other Parts
of the Body **176**
- Hernia (Rupture) **177**
- Seizures (Fits, Convulsions) **178**

Chapter 14

SERIOUS ILLNESSES THAT NEED SPECIAL MEDICAL ATTENTION 179

- Tuberculosis (TB, Consumption) **179**
- Rabies **181**
- Tetanus (Lockjaw) **182**
- Meningitis **185**
- Malaria and Mosquito-borne Illnesses **186**
- Dengue, Zika, Chikungunya,
Yellow Fever **187**
- Brucellosis (Undulant Fever, Malta Fever) **188**
- Typhoid Fever **188**
- Typhus **190**
- Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) **191**

Chapter 15

SKIN PROBLEMS 193

- General Rules for Treating Skin Problems **193**
- Instructions for Using Hot Compresses **195**
- Identifying Skin Problems **196**
- Scabies **199**
- Lice **200**
- Bedbugs **200**
- Ticks and Chiggers **201**
- Small Sores with Pus **201**
- Impetigo **202**
- Boils and Abscesses **202**
- Itching Rash, Welts, or Hives **203**
- Things That Cause Itching or Burning of the
Skin **204**
- Shingles (Herpes Zoster) **204**
- Ringworm, Tinea (Fungal Infections) **205**
- White Spots on the Face and Body **206**
- Mask of Pregnancy **207**
- Pellagra and Other Skin Problems Due
to Malnutrition **208**
- Warts (Verrucae) **210**
- Corns **210**
- Pimples and Blackheads (Acne) **211**
- Cancer of the Skin **211**
- Tuberculosis of the Skin or
Lymph Nodes **212**
- Erysipelas and Cellulitis **212**
- Gangrene (Gas Gangrene) **213**
- Ulcers of the Skin Caused by
Poor Circulation **213**
- Bed Sores **214**
- Skin Problems of Babies **215**
- Eczema
(Red Patches with Little Blisters) **216**
- Psoriasis **216**

Chapter 16

THE EYES 217

- Danger Signs **217**
- Injuries to the Eye **218**
- How to Remove a Speck of Dirt from the Eye **218**
- Chemical Burns of the Eye **219**
- Red, Painful Eyes—Different Causes **219**
- 'Pink Eye' (Conjunctivitis) **219**
- Trachoma **220**
- Infected Eyes in Newborn Babies (Neonatal Conjunctivitis) **221**
- Iritis (Inflammation of the Iris) **221**
- Glaucoma **222**
- Infection of the Tear Sac (Dacryocystitis) **223**
- Trouble Seeing Clearly **223**
- Cross-Eyes and Wandering Eyes **223**
- Sty (Hordeolum) **224**
- Pterygium **224**
- A Scrape, Ulcer, or Scar on the Cornea **224**
- Bleeding in the White of the Eye **225**
- Bleeding Behind the Cornea (Hyphema) **225**
- Pus Behind the Cornea (Hypopyon) **225**
- Cataract **225**
- Night Blindness and Xerophthalmia **226**
- Spots or 'Floaters' Before the Eyes **227**
- Double Vision **227**
- River Blindness (Onchocerciasis) **227**

Chapter 17

THE TEETH, GUMS, AND MOUTH 229

- Care of Teeth and Gums **229**
- If You Do Not Have a Toothbrush **230**
- Toothaches and Abscesses **231**
- Pyorrhea, a Disease of the Gums **231**
- Sores or Cracks at the Corners of the Mouth **232**
- White Patches or Spots in the Mouth **232**
- Cold Sores and Fever Blisters **232**

Chapter 18

THE URINARY SYSTEM AND THE GENITALS 233

- Urinary Tract Infections **234**
- Kidney or Bladder Stones **235**
- Enlarged Prostate Gland **235**
- Diseases Spread by Sexual Contact (Sexually Transmitted Infections) **236**
- Gonorrhea (Clap, VD, the Drip) and Chlamydia **236**
- Syphilis **237**
- Bubos: Bursting Lymph Nodes in the Groin **238**
- Use of a Catheter to Drain Urine **239**
- Problems of Women **241**
- Vaginal Discharge **241**
- How a Woman Can Avoid Many Infections **242**
- Pain or Discomfort in a Woman's Belly **243**
- Men and Women Who Cannot Have Children (Infertility) **244**

Chapter 19

INFORMATION FOR MOTHERS AND MIDWIVES 245

- The Menstrual Period (Monthly Bleeding in Women) **245**
- The Menopause (When Women Stop Having Periods) **246**
- Pregnancy **247**
- How to Stay Healthy during Pregnancy **247**
- Minor Problems during Pregnancy **248**
- Danger Signs in Pregnancy **249**
- Check-ups during Pregnancy (Prenatal Care) **250**

Record of Prenatal Care **253**
Things to Have Ready before the Birth **254**
Preparing for Birth **256**
Signs That Show Labor Is Near **258**
The Stages of Labor **259**
Care of the Baby at Birth **262**
Care of the Cut Cord (Navel) **263**
The Delivery of the Placenta (Afterbirth) **264**
Hemorrhaging (Heavy Bleeding) **264**
Medicines to Control Bleeding
 After Birth or Miscarriage:
 Oxytocin, Misoprostol, Ergometrine **266**

Difficult Births **267**
Tearing of the Birth Opening **269**
Care of the Newborn Baby **270**
Illnesses of the Newborn **272**
The Mothers Health after Childbirth **276**
Childbirth Fever
 (Infection after Giving Birth) **276**
Care of the Breasts **277**
Lumps or Growths in the Lower Part
 of the Belly **280**
Miscarriage (Spontaneous Abortion) **281**
High Risk Mothers and Babies **282**

Chapter 20

FAMILY PLANNING—

HAVING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN YOU WANT 283

Family Planning **284**
How Women Become Pregnant **286**
Family Planning Methods **287**
 Condoms **287**
 Birth Control Pills (Oral Contraceptives) **288**
Other Methods of Family Planning **290**
Natural Methods of Family Planning **291**
These Methods Do Not Prevent Pregnancy **293**
Methods for Those Who Never Want to
 Have More Children **294**

Chapter 21

HEALTH AND SICKNESSES OF CHILDREN 295

What to Do to Protect Children's
 Health **295**
Children's Growth—
 and the 'Road to Health' **297**
Child Health Chart **298**
Review of Children's Health Problems
 Discussed in Other Chapters **305**
Health Problems of Children Not
 Discussed in Other Chapters **309**
Earache and Ear Infections **309**
Sore Throat and Inflamed Tonsils **309**
Rheumatic Fever **310**
Infectious Diseases of Childhood **311**
Chickenpox **311**
Measles (Rubeola) **311**
German Measles (Rubella) **312**
Mumps **312**
Whooping Cough **313**
Diphtheria **313**
Infantile Paralysis (Polio) **314**
How to Make Simple Crutches **315**
Problems Children Are Born With **316**
Dislocated Hip **316**
Umbilical Hernia
 (Belly Button that Sticks Out) **317**
A 'Swollen Testicle'
 (Hydrocele or Hernia) **317**
Mentally Slow, Deaf, or Deformed
 Children **318**
The Spastic Child (Cerebral Palsy) **320**
Slow Development in the
 First Months of Life **321**
Sickle Cell Disease **321**
Helping Children Learn **322**

Chapter 22

HEALTH AND SICKNESSES OF OLDER PEOPLE 323

Summary of Health Problems Discussed in
Other Chapters **323**
Other Important Illnesses of Old Age **325**
Heart Trouble **325**
Words to Younger Persons Who Want to
Stay Healthy When Older **326**
Stroke (Apoplexy, Cerebro-Vascular
Accident, CVA) **327**

Deafness **327**
Loss of Sleep (Insomnia) **328**
Diseases Found More Often in People
over Forty **328**
Cirrhosis of the Liver **328**
Gallbladder Problems **329**
Accepting Death **330**

Chapter 23

THE MEDICINE KIT 331

How to Care for Your Medicine Kit **332**
Buying Supplies for the Medicine Kit **333**
The Home Medicine Kit **334**

The Village Medicine Kit **336**
Words to the Village Storekeeper
(or Pharmacist) **338**

THE GREEN PAGES—The Uses, Dosage, and Precautions for Medicines 339

List of Medicines in the Green Pages **341**
Index of Medicines in the Green Pages **344**
Information on Medicines **350**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION 399

HIV and AIDS **399**
Sores on the Genitals **402**
Circumcision and Excision **404**
Special Care for Small, Early,
and Underweight Babies **405**
Ear Wax **405**
Leishmaniasis **406**

Guinea Worm **406**
Emergencies Caused by Cold **408**
How to Measure Blood Pressure **410**
Poisoning from Pesticides **412**
Complications from Abortion **414**
Drug Abuse and Addiction **416**

VOCABULARY—Explaining Difficult Words 419

ADDRESSES FOR TEACHING MATERIALS 429

INDEX (Yellow Pages) 433

Dosage Instructions for Persons Who Cannot Read
Patient Reports
Other Books from Hesperian
Information About Vital Signs

Introduction

This handbook has been written primarily for those who live far from medical centers, in places where there is no doctor. But even where there are doctors, people can and should take the lead in their own health care. So this book is for everyone who cares. It has been written in the belief that:

- 1. Health care is not only everyone's right, but everyone's responsibility.**
- 2. Informed self-care should be the main goal of any health program or activity.**
- 3. Ordinary people provided with clear, simple information can prevent and treat most common health problems in their own homes—earlier, cheaper, and often better than can doctors.**
- 4. Medical knowledge should not be the guarded secret of a select few, but should be freely shared by everyone.**
- 5. People with little formal education can be trusted as much as those with a lot. And they are just as smart.**
- 6. Basic health care should not be delivered, but encouraged.**

Clearly, a part of informed self-care is knowing one's own limits. Therefore guidelines are included not only for **what to do**, but for **when to seek help**. The book points out those cases when it is important to see or get advice from a health worker or doctor. But because doctors or health workers are not always nearby, the book also suggests **what to do in the meantime**—even for very serious problems.

This book has been written in fairly basic English, so that persons without much formal education (or whose first language is not English) can understand it. The language used is simple but, I hope, not childish. A few more difficult words have been used where they are appropriate or fit well. Usually they are used in ways that their meanings can be easily guessed. This way, those who read this book have a chance to increase their language skills as well as their medical skills.

Important words the reader may not understand are explained in a word list or *vocabulary* at the end of the book. The first time a word listed in the vocabulary is mentioned in a chapter it is usually written in *italics*.

Where There Is No Doctor was first written in Spanish for farm people in the mountains of Mexico where, years ago, the author helped form a health care network now run by the villagers themselves. *Where There Is No Doctor* has been translated into more than 80 languages and is used by village health workers in over 100 countries.

The first English edition was the result of many requests to adapt it for use in Africa and Asia. I received help and suggestions from persons with experience in many parts of the world. But the English edition seems to have lost much of the flavor and usefulness of the original Spanish edition, which was written for a specific area, and for people who have for years been my neighbors and friends. In rewriting the book to serve people in many parts of the world, it has in some ways become too general.

To be fully useful, this book should be adapted by persons familiar with the health needs, customs, special ways of healing, and local language of specific areas.



Persons or programs who wish to use this book, or portions of it, in preparing their own manuals and activities for villagers or health workers are encouraged to do so. We often grant permission at no charge, provided the parts reproduced are distributed free or at cost—not for profit. Please see the explanation online at www.hesperian.org/about/open-copyright, or contact us at permissions@hesperian.org to answer any questions. Our goal is to help you design a program that works for you, not to make money.

For local or regional health programs that do not have the resources for revising this book or preparing their own manuals, it is strongly suggested that if the present edition is used, leaflets or inserts be supplied with the book to provide additional information as needed.

In the **Green Pages** (the Uses, Dosage, and Precautions for Medicines) blank spaces have been left to write in common brand names and prices of medicines. Once again, local programs or organizations distributing the book would do well to make up a list of generic or low-cost brand names and prices, to be included with each copy of the book.



This book was written for anyone who wants to do something about his or her own and other people's health. However, it has been widely used as a training and work manual for community health workers. For this reason, an introductory section has been added for the health worker, making clear that **the health worker's first job is to share her knowledge and help educate people.**

Today in over-developed as well as under-developed countries, existing health care systems are in a state of crisis. Often, human needs are not being well met. There is too little fairness. Too much is in the hands of too few.

Let us hope that through a more generous sharing of knowledge, and through learning to use what is best in both traditional and modern ways of healing, people everywhere will develop a kinder, more sensible approach to caring—for their own health, and for each other.

—D.W.

Note about this New Edition

In this revised edition of *Where There is No Doctor*, we have added new information and updated old information, based on the latest scientific knowledge. Health care specialists from many parts of the world have generously given advice and suggestions.

When it would fit without having to change page numbers, we have added new information to the main part of the book. (This way, the numbering stays the same, so that page references in our other books, such as **Helping Health Workers Learn**, will still be correct.)

The **Additional Information** section at the end of the book (p. 399) has information about health problems of growing or special concern: HIV and AIDS, sores on the genitals, leishmaniasis, complications from abortion, guinea worm, and others. Here also are topics such as measuring blood pressure, misuse of pesticides, drug addiction, and a method of caring for early and underweight babies.

New ideas and information can be found throughout the book—medical knowledge is always changing! For example:

- **Nutrition** advice has changed. Experts used to tell mothers to give children more foods rich in proteins. But it is now known that what most poorly nourished children need is more energy-rich foods. Many low-cost energy foods, especially grains, provide enough protein *if the child eats enough of them*. Finding ways to give enough energy foods is now emphasized, instead of the ‘four food groups’. (See Chapter 11.)
- Advice for treatment of **stomach ulcer** is different nowadays. For years doctors recommended drinking lots of milk. But according to recent studies, it is better to drink lots of water, not milk. (See p. 129.)
- Knowledge about **special drinks for diarrhea** (oral rehydration therapy) has also changed. Not long ago experts thought that drinks made with sugar were best. But we now know that drinks made with cereals do more to prevent water loss, slow down diarrhea, and combat malnutrition than do sugar-based drinks or “ORS” packets. (See p. 152.)
- A section has been added on **sterilizing equipment**. This is important to prevent the spread of certain diseases, such as HIV. (See p. 74.)
- We have also added sections on **mosquito-borne illnesses** (p. 187), **sickle cell disease** (p. 321), **contraceptive implants** (p. 290), and using **birth control pills for emergency contraception** (p. 395).
- Page 105 contains revised information about **treatment of snakebite**.
- See page 139 for details on building the fly-killing **VIP latrine**.

If you have suggestions for improving this book, please let us know. Your ideas are very important to us!

The **Green Pages** now include additional medicines, including **anti-retrovirals** for treating HIV. Some diseases have become resistant to the medicines used in the past, so it is now harder to give simple medical advice for certain diseases—especially malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid, and sexually spread infections. Often we give several possibilities for treatment. **For many infectious diseases you will need local advice** about which medicines are available and effective in your area.

In updating the information on medicines, we mostly include only those on the World Health Organization's **List of Essential Drugs**. (However we also discuss some widely used but dangerous medicines to give warnings and to discourage their use—see also pages 50 to 53.) In trying to cover health needs and variations in many parts of the world, we have listed more medicines than will be needed for any one area. To persons preparing adaptations of this book, we strongly suggest that the Green Pages be shortened and modified to meet the specific needs and treatment patterns in your country.

In this new edition of *Where There Is No Doctor* we continue to stress the value of traditional forms of healing, and have added some more “home remedies.” However, since many folk remedies depend on local plants and customs, we have added only a few which use commonly found items such as garlic. We hope those adapting this book will add home remedies useful to their area.

Community action is emphasized throughout this book. For example, today it is often not enough to explain to mothers that ‘breast is best’. Communities must organize to make sure that mothers are able to breastfeed their babies at work. Likewise, problems such as misuse of pesticides (p. 412), drug abuse (p. 416), and unsafe abortions (p. 414) are best solved by people working together to make their communities safer, healthier, and more fair.



**“Health for all” can be achieved only through the organized demand by people for greater equality in terms of land, wages, services, and basic rights.
More power to the people!**