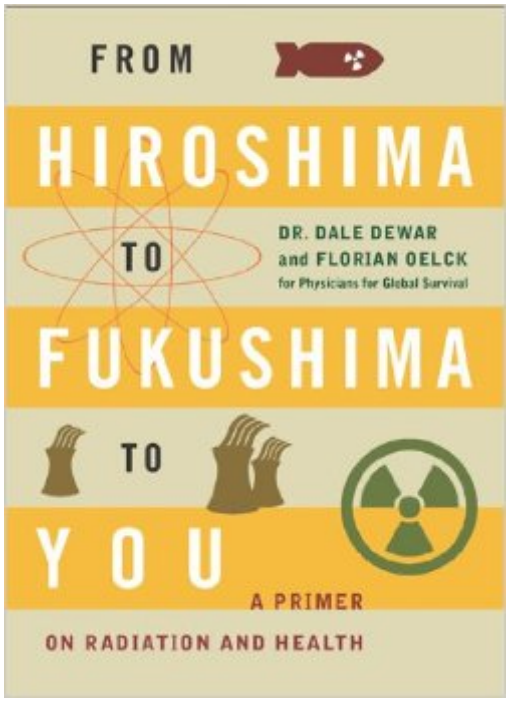
From Hiroshima To Fukushima To You



Synopsis

The bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, brought radiation to international attention but the exact nature of what had been unleashed was still unclear to most. The 1986 meltdown at the Chernobyl nuclear plant again made headlines with estimates of fatalities ranging from 4000 to almost a million deaths. By the time of the shocking 2011 disaster at the Fukushima nuclear plant social media meant governments and corporations no longer had a monopoly over the release of information, but transparency remains low on the agenda. Meanwhile, few physicians give thought to the delayed health effects of radiation. It has been the bold physician who has challenged the potential overuse of chest X-rays, CT scanning, or PET scans. This book provides clear and accurate information about radiation so that we can all make informed choices. In clear language it offers answers to citizens' questions: What is radiation? Where do we encounter it? What are the benefits and risks? How do we develop a responsible future around the uses and abuses of radioactivity?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book offers an unblinking look from an independent physician at the human health effects of ionizing radiation as of 2014. As a writer myself, who has a medical student in the family, I always value the health professional's perspective. I also know the brutal challenges of writing on this subject. On the question of bias, Dr. Dewar acknowledges putting the patient's needs first; to me, it's not an issue of bias for a physician author to do that. As the preface itself notes, "this is the doctor's voice." Funding for the book was provided by the Physicians for Global Survival, the

Canadian affiliate of International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War. I myself have financial connections with neither the global nuclear industry nor any anti-nuclear groups.Several of this book’s chapters present the essential facts. Topics like radiation in medicine, industrial uses of radiation, nuclear power plants, uranium mining, transport of radioactive materials, and radiation in war are expertly handled. At the end of the book a Notes section provides references to mostly online sources, drawn from the global nuclear industry, the popular press, scholarly journals and various online locations. A real standout is the section on smoke detectors; information on that topic is otherwise very difficult to find. The book also shines in the clarity of its definitions. Terms like radioactive are too often defined elsewhere with such technical language that the average reader is left none the wiser, but not here! FHFY has my favorite definition of "radioactive," and that opinion comes after 3 years of reading every book on nuclear power ever published in English.

I would note that this book is the product of physician in the field of family medicine and a graduate from a school of international affairs. Neither has had any training in the field of nuclear science and radiation. Hence their competence to speak in this field is suspect. Furthermore this work has been supported by Physicians for Global Survival which is affiliated with Physicians for Social Responsibility, an organization that was redirected by Helen Caldicott from abolishing nuclear weapons to abolishing nuclear power. In this endeavour Caldicott has made the most outrageous claims on the dangers of nuclear power and radiation to the point of being almost indistinguishable from falsehoods. Thus to begin I was not favourably disposed towards this book.Upon perusing this book, almost the first sentence I happened to glance at, which was on page 25, was:"A neutron is made up of a proton plus an electron and is neutrally charged."followed by"Neutrons behave like a type of glue to keep positively charged protons together as nuclei become larger."The first sentence is grossly incorrect, and demonstrates a complete ignorance of nuclear science, and no one with any shred of competence in the field could have written it. The neutron is not made up of a proton and an electron, There can be no electron inside the neutron because the electron wave function is too large to fit within the spacial dimensions of the neutron. The neutron is an arrangement of quarks and gluons whose combined charges add up to zero. A proton is made up of the same constituents, but in this case the combined charges add up to +1 e where e is the elementary charge. An electron has a charge of -1 e.

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