Pain and symptom control and a cheerful text on drug calculations feature in this month’s look at some of the latest books for healthcare professionals to hit the shelves.

**Drug Calculations For Nurses: A Step By Step Approach**

Robert Lapham and Heather Agar
Arnold 250pp £5.99
ISBN 0-340-60479-4

Written by a pharmacist and staff nurse, *Drug Calculations For Nurses* is user friendly to a fault, with cheerfully silly illustrations adding light relief to the text. If you are about to return to nursing and dread the prospect of putting your numeracy to the test, this is the book for you with its detailed, worked examples and graded exercises.

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**Symptom Management In Advanced Cancer**

Robert Twycross
Raddcliffe Medical Press 33pp £21.50
ISBN 1-85775-058-6

Although written primarily for doctors, this easy to use book will make a useful addition to the library of any healthcare professional involved with the care of people with advanced cancer.

A discussion of general principles is followed by comprehensive coverage of pain relief and the use of oral morphine. Symptoms, whether the result of disease or the side effects of treatment, are grouped together — for example, psychological, neurological, alimentary — and are considered in a logical fashion beginning with a clear definition where appropriate, moving on to causes, clinical features and management.

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It is good to see the patient and family as the central focus of the text.

A chapter on therapeutic emergencies is included and profiles of the most commonly prescribed classes of drugs. The book has a comprehensive index and is well referenced.

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**Acute Pain Management: A Practical Guide**

Pamela E Macintyre and L Brian Ready
WB Saunders 198pp £14.95

This clear and concise guide to acute pain management is multidisciplinary and a useful reference source for an acute pain service team. The text draws on the experience of two centres of excellence, one in Australia and the other in the US.

Although the preface claims the book to be for the UK market too, there is little evidence of the use of the extensive UK literature and research now available.

Obvious weaknesses are the relatively little attention paid to education and the omission of patient outcome and auditing procedures, which are an indispensable part of today’s acute pain management.

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**Nursing Theories: The Base For Professional Nursing Practice. Fourth edition.**

Julia B George, Editor
Prentice Hall International 469pp £16.95
ISBN 0-8385-7053-4

An American book, *Nursing Theories* is well written and outlines 21 different theories of nursing ranging from Florence Nightingale’s to the less familiar Boykin and Schoenhofer’s theory!

It is a useful reference text which includes sections about the nursing theory and the nursing process. Although not easy reading, it does justice to this complex subject in a logical manner.