The book begins by providing an overview of why it is important to prevent and treat cardiovascular risk, how to achieve this and the key cardiovascular guidelines available. It includes core guideline recommendations and areas of discrepancy between guidelines, the different risk calculations, treatment recommendations and emerging risk factors and therapies, as well as treatment plans for individuals with diabetes who are at high risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

The second half of the book provides specific, practical, evidence-based chapters on the management of modifiable risk factors—lifestyle changes to reduce cardiovascular risk, pharmacotherapy for improving lipid profiles, for lowering blood pressure and for lowering blood glucose. The book concludes with a chapter on the long-term management of cardiovascular disease, giving consideration to the barriers and issues which prevent many patients from reaching guideline goals, and ends with a glimpse into the management of cardiovascular risk in the future where strategies based on consideration of total cardiovascular risk and targeted at high-risk patients with good chronic care management systems in place are likely to prove more effective than the current opportunistic approach of treating individual cardiovascular risk factors.

This book will appeal to many primary care clinicians because it is a short and easy read, with succinct practical advice drawn from an extensive guideline and reference base. The layout is easy on the eye with many large figures, tables, diagrams and a few flow-charts. Each chapter topic can be read as a standalone reference which is particularly useful for the busy clinician who may wish to get to the nub of an issue quickly, and I found the chapters on pharmacotherapy of lipids, blood pressure and blood glucose particularly useful updates for daily clinical practice.

There are references to the same key regional guidelines in a number of chapters, which may seem repetitious when reading the book in one sitting, but make sense when dipping back into a particular chapter to refresh one’s memory or look something up.

This is an excellent practical reference on a very topical issue for all those working in primary care, and I recommend it highly. An essential addition to every general practice library for 2009.