

PMF Book Review March 2026

Pocket Guide to Clinical Microbiology 5th Edition C.D. Doern and A. L. Bryson (Authors)
American Society for Microbiology 2026 pp396 \$53 (ASM Members)

The book is described on the back cover as the essential companion for clinical microbiology professional delivering up-to-date information on microbial identification, diagnostics, and treatment options, tailored as a quick reference at the bench or in the clinic.

What is its value to the pharmaceutical microbiologist? The sections on the taxonomic classification of medically important microorganisms, indigenous and pathogenic microbes of humans, bacterial and fungal diagnosis, and susceptibility testing and methods of organism identification will be valuable in the investigation of the origin of a microbial isolate and the assessment as to whether the isolate is a frank pathogen or an opportunistic pathogen, which would be objectionable, if found in a non-sterile drug products. The list of the normal microflora from a body site or the environment is important to microbiologists in terms of their differentiation from human pathogens. The tables of the differential morphological, physiological, and biochemical characteristics of pathogens and their closely related non-pathogen species is useful for phenotypic identification. As clinical microbiologists have transition to MALDI-TOF mass spectrometric methods for the first line identification, information on the limitation of the speciation using this technology in terms of closely related species is valuable.

In the preface the authors express their hope that pocket guide will provide a distilled version of the four volume ASM Manual of Clinical Microbiology, which quickly, concisely, and accurately provides the information that a microbiologist needs to answer most questions.

I recommend that pharmaceutical microbiologists arrange to purchase this book either as a hardcopy or eBook as reference material.

Tony Cundell, Ph. D.
Principal Consultant,
Microbiological Consulting, LLC
Rye, New York