

**Essentials of Geriatric Psychiatry, 2nd ed**

edited by Dan G. Blazer, MD, PhD, and David C. Steffens, MD, MHS.  
American Psychiatric Press, Inc, Arlington, VA, 2012, 420 pages,  
\$98.00 (paper).

In the age of easy Internet access to information, many question the relevance of textbooks. After all, you can get the answer to any question within seconds, much faster than you can pull a book off the shelf, look in the index, and try to find the answer. *Essentials of Geriatric Psychiatry, Second Edition*, edited by Dan G. Blazer and David C. Steffens, demonstrates that a good textbook can still be a valuable tool, especially for the student who is coming anew to a subject. In 20 succinct chapters, *Essentials of Geriatric Psychiatry* covers the evaluation, diagnostic considerations, and treatment of the psychiatric disorders commonly seen in older patients. Two introductory chapters nicely summarize demographic, epidemiologic, and physiologic aspects of aging without falling into the trap of too much detail, a common problem in textbooks of geriatrics. The treatment chapters are up to date, citing recent studies with clinical relevance and reviewing new drugs.

I highly recommend this book for medical students and residents who are new to the field, to geriatric psychiatry and medicine fellows, and to practitioners who want depth but only to a degree applicable in clinical practice. The majority of mental health care is provided by non-mental health practitioners, and the book is written at a level and in a style that is accessible to and can inform the practice of primary care physicians, nurses, social workers, and others caring for the rising number of elderly patients.

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