

Climate Change and Public Health, Second Edition

Alida M. Gertz, MD

AUTHOR AFFILIATION:

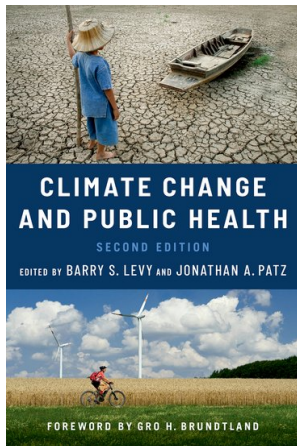
WellStar Douglas Hospital, Douglasville, GA

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Within 20 chapters, the second edition of *Climate Change and Public Health* is completely rewritten from the earlier 2015 edition by multiple contributing authors and covers a variety of related topics, ranging from effects on food, water, vector-borne diseases, mental health, violence, and allergies and asthma, to possible solutions related to policy changes, community level actions, and research agendas. The editors are well-qualified. Barry Levy, MD, MPH, has spent more than 3 decades practicing, teaching, and writing about a plethora of public health topics and previously served as the president of the American Public Health Association. Jonathan Patz, MD, MPH, helped lead iterations of both the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the US National Climate Assessment (NCA). Notably, both editors are White males, living and working in the global north. Given the extremely unbalanced effect climate change is likely to have on populations traditionally underrepresented in global and public health (which is thoroughly covered and emphasized in the text), future editions would benefit from including an editor from the global south, particularly from one of the countries that is likely to be most impacted by climate change.

Multiple chapters begin with illustrative vignettes emphasizing climate change effects on individual lives. Many chapters have boxes with related but slightly separate topics. For example, the vector-borne disease chapter contains two boxes: one about vector-borne disease in Europe and another on Lyme disease. The chapters and boxes at times seem disjointed as if chosen based on the interests of the particular authors rather than a predetermined, comprehensive, and logical list. A majority of the references are also more than a decade old and would benefit from updating. Furthermore, some sections that should be added include a description of ongoing studies exploring nanotechnology solutions, a review of current research investigating bacterial and other microlevel breakdown techniques of harmful chemicals in the environment, a description of projects exploring weather/meteorologic manipulation of atmospheric conditions and artificial cooling techniques, and an exploration of the potential for use of artificial intelligence to assist with solution finding. Another topic that would benefit from additional emphasis is the enormous motivating force financial gain and profits have played, and continue to play, in driving industries to forge recklessly ahead using practices known to be hazardous to the environment and human health. The book does a good job covering many of the topics in the IPCC and the NCA, however it does not reference the fifth NCA, which came out this year and was an exhaustive review of the current evidence.

Although not entirely comprehensive, the text provides a foundation of knowledge about the various effects of climate change on the health of individuals and communities, as well as a framework for thinking about how local, national, and international policies can start to address climate change and its impacts. Importantly it includes a discussion of alternative energy sources and policies to promote the most sustainable of these methods. It also promotes grassroots and community-based efforts, which are truly needed in parallel with national and international level efforts if we are to be successful as a society in combating climate change. For the seasoned public health practitioner, this text may not add much to their understanding and knowledge of the topic. However, for readers who are

just beginning their climate change journey, this book will certainly serve as a primer for understanding the effects of climate change on public health.

Along with inequity, climate change is one the most important public health challenges of our time. This book may serve as an introduction to this enormous and, at times, seemingly insurmountable problem that we have created for ourselves. It also provides an overview of some of the tools that can be used to begin to reverse the damage we have done. Ensuring that clinicians are aware of this topic so that they can help find ways to combat the problem is an important undertaking. Without a healthy planet, eventually no individuals will be healthy. We as clinicians must start thinking about how to improve not only the health of the individual patients in front of us, but also how to improve the health of the communities in which they live, the environments they inhabit, and the health of the planet that sustains us all.