

pharmacologic or alternative approaches to women's health concerns. It is a comprehensive but concise compendium of the scope of women's health issues seen in primary care.

Gynecology and medical diseases of special importance for women are covered. The handbook includes age-specific health-promotion recommendations starting with adolescence; such lifestyle issues as parenting, divorce, sexual orientation, and psychologic disorders related to abuse; and relationships.

Each chapter is in outline format and starts with a section called "The Issues." This section discusses the role of each topic in women's health and areas of controversy. Next is a section called "The Theory," which is a brief review of basic information. The final section, "An Approach," provides practical and specific recommendations. This last section reflects, in part, the author's own practice style and experience, which is a mixed blessing in an otherwise wonderful reference. For example, three approaches to breast-cancer screening were described by different contributing authors.

Nevertheless, the feast of useful information offered in this handbook, written by and for family physicians, far outweighs any drawbacks. It should be in every residency and family physician's library.

Sara Cate, MD  
Central Washington Family Medicine  
Yakima, Wash

**Primary Care Management of Heart Disease.** Edited by George J. Taylor. 658 pp, illustrated. St. Louis, Mo, Mosby, 2000. \$69. ISBN 0-323-00256-0.

Cardiac illnesses are part of a family physician's daily practice. With ever-changing diagnostic and therapeutic advances in the field of cardiology, a reference text pertaining to cardiac issues would be an asset to a practicing physician. *Primary Care Management of Heart Disease* is designed to fill that void in one's medical library.

This hard-bound text is divided into three general parts. The first part on general principles is made up of 10 chapters on topics that include basic pathophysiology, the history and examination of cardiac patients, and various diagnostic tests, such as electrocardiograms, stress testing, echocardiograms, nuclear testing, and catheterizations. The second part addresses a multitude of cardiac illnesses. It is divided into eight sections comprised of 43 chapters. Topics covered include atherosclerotic and valvular disease, arrhythmias, heart failure, and vascular diseases. Additional chapters address ailments and conditions that can affect the heart, such as endocrine, pulmonary, and renal disease, as well as issues of pregnancy, nutritional disorders, and aging. A section is also included on management issues, such as surgical risk and management, intensive care issues, cardiac emergencies, cardiac disability and other legal issues, and palliative care. The last section is an exhaustive compendium of drugs used in cardiology, listed by generic name, including their pharmacology, indications, dosing, costs, side

effects, interactions and cautions, and special considerations.

Each chapter is authored by both a cardiologist and a primary care physician. The chapters covering the cardiac illnesses are divided into sections on epidemiology and etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, management, and treatment. There are references and a bibliography at the end of each chapter. Boldface red lettering delineates the various sections well. The numerous figures and tables that highlight the prose stand out against a light red background. The text is easy to read, and the subject matter is presented in a user-friendly manner. Despite being a comprehensive text, this book does not seem overburdened in minutia. The chapters on the various cardiac illnesses address these topics in a well-organized, easy-to-read format, providing the practitioner with useful current information on the more common cardiac conditions encountered in daily practice. The section on noncardiac illnesses affecting the heart and the chapter on various management issues, such as cardiac disability and end-of-life issues, were nice features.

This text would serve the practicing primary care physician, medical resident, and medical student well as a cardiology reference. It is comprehensive but does not feel overwhelming.

Ralph W. Dickson, MD  
McSherrystown Family Practice  
McSherrystown, Penna

**Differential Diagnosis of Common Complaints. Fourth edition.** By Robert H. Seller. 442 pp, Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 2000. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 0-7216-8017-8.

Family physicians encounter daily the challenge of the differential diagnosis of common symptoms. It behooves those physicians to be thoroughly familiar with strategies that promote a timely and accurate diagnosis, given the numerous demands for efficiency in contemporary practice settings. Seller orients the 4th edition of his book once again to the patient's initial complaint and the expeditious evaluation thereof.

The essence of this soft-bound book is 36 chapters, each of which describes the evaluation of one common symptom, in alphabetic order, from abdominal pain to weight loss. Every chapter has a standardized format. The introduction includes the most common diagnostic considerations of the symptom under discussion. A section on the nature of the patient reviews the typical profile of the patient with the symptom (age, sex, associated illness, etc). The next section expands on the nature of the symptom according to its duration, acute vs chronic aspect, and typical characteristics. Then sections on associated symptoms, precipitating and aggravating factors, ameliorating factors, physical findings, diagnostic studies, and less common diagnostic considerations follow. An invaluable table summarizing the differential diagnostic possibilities, as well as information from each of the aforementioned sections, appears at the end of each chapter, as does a recent literature documentation.

The author in the Preface quotes the adage, "If you don't think about it, you will never diagnose it." This manual clearly takes care of that issue as it directs one to consider quickly most of the common diagnoses associated with these 36 common symptoms. I took 3 days of initial office patient complaints and found 90% represented here. In addition to the expected chapters on headache, sore throat, earache, and cough, I found the chapters on forgetfulness, pain in the upper extremity, and pain in the lower extremity to be refreshing and of immediate practical use. Other chapters of interest included those concerning dizziness, insomnia, swelling of the legs, and vision problems.

The text is well organized, making it easy to access the information most important to the clinician, ie, that which adds to the patient's symptoms and moves to a supportable diagnosis. The 32-page index includes all the symptoms and complaints covered in the entire text, which turns out to be quite helpful in determining whether one should pursue a particular clinical concern. As intended, there is no attempt to include therapy in this forum; the reader is directed elsewhere to that end. Because the symptoms selected by the author are common, the experienced practitioner will likely not find the book a necessity, yet it certainly can serve as an effective adjunct in the clinic. Those earlier in their careers, on the other hand, might find this book an essential aid to establishing efficiency in office practice by avoiding the time spent in pursuit of similar content found in lengthy textbooks.

*Differential Diagnosis of Common Complaints* qualifies as a helpful addition to the clinician's office library.

James J. Bergman, MD  
Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound  
Bellevue, Wash

**Neurology for Non-Neurologists. Fourth edition.** By Wigbert C. Wiederholt. 342 pp. Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 2000. \$39.95 (paper). ISBN 0-7216-8874-8.

Translations of the intricacies of specialty fields into clinical practicalities for the primary care physician are especially challenging but rewarding if done well. The specialist writer must interpret and organize the complexities of pathophysiology, differential diagnosis, and disease management in a fashion that is relevant for the physician in a demanding practice setting. The author of this fourth edition of *Neurology for Non-Neurologists* has crafted a work that clearly exceeds these expectations.

The first three chapters of this text include a review of clinical neuroanatomy, the neurologic history and examination, and ancillary methods of study for the evaluation of neurologic problems. The section on the mental status examination is particularly well presented. The remaining 16 chapters include focused discussions of specific neurologic symptoms or disease states, such as headache, cerebrovascular disease, muscle diseases, seizure disorders, Parkinson disease, dizziness and vertigo, and congenital anomalies and inherited disorders. The book contains multiple well-designed tables and an index, and

each chapter features key references, which have been updated since the last printing in 1995.

The clarity of the language of this book is its primary attractiveness. Ranging from neurologic examination maneuvers or diagnostic tests to distillation of journal studies into practical correlates or to descriptions of medically appropriate treatment pathways, the author provides concise discussions using understandable terminology. For example, in the chapter reviewing cerebrovascular disease, the author outlines the characteristics of major types of stroke, the use of neuroimaging studies, and the applicability of current treatment interventions based on the specialty literature. Repeatedly, major points are emphasized clearly, and myths are criticized appropriately.

In summary, this text would be an important library addition for a broad reach of providers, including family medicine residents, practicing family physicians, and allied health professionals. Given the explosion of knowledge in the neurosciences and the rapidly increasing elderly population, the family physician will need well-written resources to evaluate a variety of neurologic signs and patient complaints. *Neurology for Non-Neurologists* will not only assist the practicing physician in initiating a diagnostic evaluation and treatment regimen, but will also facilitate appropriate referrals to the neurologist.

Kathryn M. Larson, MD  
University of California, Irvine  
Orange, Calif

**20 Common Problems in Dermatology.** By Alan B. Fleischer, Jr, Steven R. Feldman, Aaron S. Katz, and Beth D. Clayton. 303 pp, illustrated. New York, McGraw-Hill, 2000. \$34.95 (paper). ISBN 0-07-022067-0.

Skin problems are common in family practice, so it is important to have a solid background and good references in dermatology. This book serves as a basic guide to the 20 most common skin diseases as determined by the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey.

The book is organized into four parts with one chapter for each of the 20 diagnosis. Inflammatory skin diseases are addressed by chapters on acne, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, rosacea, and urticaria. Infectious skin diseases are covered by chapters on candidiasis, folliculitis, herpes simplex, HIV-related skin disease, impetigo, tinea, varicella zoster, and warts. Skin growths and tumors include epidermoid cysts and lipomas, melanoma, nevi, and other skin tumors, and miscellaneous skin diseases include alopecia, xerosis, and vitiligo.

The text reads easily and provides the basic knowledge required for most skin conditions encountered in family practice. The 159 photographs are clear, the 8 figures are drawn well, and the 24 tables are helpful. The information serves as a platform of basic dermatology. For instance, in Chapter 3 we are reminded that "psoriasis involves the hyperproliferation of the epidermis in combination with the activation of inflammatory pathways." In Chapter 14 the authors explain that "sebaceous