

a very practical approach based on 30 years of experience. In the introduction he comments, "Therapeutic aggressiveness must be tempered by the potential of the therapy used to cause undesirable results." Throughout the text Dr. Kantor provides important points about adverse effects and laboratory monitoring. The manual is worth purchasing if the primary care clinician wants a "memory-jogger" concerning the medical management of the arthritides.

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Conn's Current Therapy, 1992. Edited by Robert E. Rakel. 1248 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 1992. \$55. ISBN 0-7216-4269-1.

Outstanding Broadway plays fill theaters for many years. *Conn's Current Therapy* entered the medical stage in 1949 and with this edition answers the curtain call for the 44th year. This longevity indicates a dedicated audience of readers who return to a familiar text to find useful medical information.

This edition updates all of the 280 topics reviewed. The chapters remain concise and readable, and revisions address changes in therapy that have occurred since the last publication. The text is arranged in broad sections that parallel the traditional curriculum in internal medicine. Particularly strong sections exist for infectious disease, cardiology, hematology, and pulmonary medicine.

For quick review family physicians will find the internal medicine sections of *Conn's Current Therapy* more useful than most internal medicine texts. Other sections provide limited help to most generalists, because coverage of musculoskeletal disorders, pediatrics, psychiatry, and obstetrics and gynecology are not comprehensive. The section on dermatology contains no pictures, which diminishes its value.

The long-term success of *Conn's Current Therapy* underscores that this text has found a niche in the practitioner's library. The editor and authors meet the goal of "providing the practicing physician with a concise, practical reference that includes the most recent advances in therapy." Family physicians whose practices heavily emphasize internal medicine will find this book a true friend, while others can always use the text for a quick review of common medical problems.

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Difficult Diagnosis 2. Edited by Robert B. Taylor. 576 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 1992. \$60. ISBN 0-7216-3481-8.

Difficult Diagnosis 2 is the second volume of a series of collected clinical problems that represent diagnostic challenges to the physician. The problems selected

for this volume, typically signs, symptoms, or abnormal laboratory values, occur with varying frequency in a general or family practice.

The 71 topics are authored by family physicians and other specialists. Arranged alphabetically, each chapter addresses a clinical problem and includes background information, important components of the history with examples of focused questions, physical examination, diagnostic studies, and assessment. Topics are representative of most areas of medicine except perhaps for obstetrics. A sampling of some of the clinical problems includes chronic fatigue, hoarseness, acute chest pain, stridor, hepatomegaly, pelvic mass, limb pain in childhood, and hypoglycemia.

Some chapters focus on less common problems, such as athetosis and phantogeusia (phantom taste). The authors, however, provide a directed and concise discussion of these problems so that the busy physician can deal with these diagnostic challenges during the time-limited office visit.

The language of the text is quite readable. Individual chapter sections are clearly labeled for easy reference, and photographs, tables, and diagrams are used carefully to highlight salient points. Readers will need to rely on other general texts, however, for information regarding treatment.

The editor acknowledges that the primary audience of this text is the family physician and the limited specialist who encounters patients with problems outside his or her expertise. Certainly, it is important to remember that family physicians must address difficult cases in the primary care office without resorting to premature referral. This book will serve the family physician extremely well and underscores the importance of complete and dedicated diagnostic evaluations of patient problems.

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Handbook of Drug Therapy in Rheumatic Disease: Pharmacology and Clinical Aspects. By Joe G. Hardin, Jr. and Gesina L. Longenecker. 223 pp., illustrated. Boston, Little, Brown, 1991. \$29 (paper). ISBN 0-316-34604-7.

This review of drug therapy in rheumatic disease is thoughtful and eminently readable. The intention of this book is to provide information on the mechanism of actions and the use of different drugs in rheumatic disorders. My only reservation is that it lacks a section on osteoporosis management and treatment.

Essentially, the handbook is a practical guide for the busy primary care physician. Because the content of the text is well presented and relevant to family practice, it provides an efficient tool through which physicians can quickly review the treatment modalities for rheumatic disease. For the most part, the information appears to be up to date and well