Manual of Clinical Problems in Adult Ambulatory Care. Second edition. *Edited by Laurie Dornbrand, Axalla J. Hoole, and C. Glenn Pickard Jr. 748 pp., illustrated. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1992. $26.50. ISBN 0-316-19019-5.*

The editors of the *Manual of Clinical Problems in Adult Ambulatory Care* try to bridge the "gap between the information supplied in traditional medical texts and the day-to-day concerns of patient care" to meet "the needs of general care clinicians at all levels." Pediatrics, obstetrics, and dermatology are largely ignored. No specific chapters are devoted to principles of drug prescribing, functional assessment of the elderly, or clinical decision making. The authors are predominantly internists and medical and surgical subspecialists.

This manual is spiral-bound, soft-covered, and identical in cover dimensions to *The Washington Manual* but 25 percent thicker. Thus, it is ponderous for the pocket and flimsy for the shelf. Tables and figures are underused; type is micro-sized (20 characters per inch, 8 lines per inch).

The manual is divided into 20 sections (Constitutional Symptoms, Eye Problems, Ear Problems, Upper Respiratory Problems, and so on), which are subdivided into 145 chapters. Sections contain from 2 (Allergic Conditions) to 13 chapters (Endocrine and Metabolic Problems, Cardiovascular Problems). The chapters typically have 4 pages of unreferenced text plus one page of annotated references.

According to the editors, subjects were "selected because of their frequency in ambulatory medical practice" and include diagnosis-related (e.g., asthma) and problem-oriented (e.g., proteinuria) topics, "depending on the level of resolution with which medical conditions typically present." Advice seems medically mainstream, although there are always points with which one could take issue. For example, although the NIH-National Asthma Education Program guidelines are referenced, the advice in the asthma chapter is to provide intravenous aminophylline 1 hour into therapy of a refractory asthmatic episode before the recommendation for corticosteroid administration.

Because of the lead time from manuscript preparation to press, the latest therapeutics (pravastatin [Zocor], sertraline [Zoloft], Norplant) are not included. Family physicians will find little dermatology or orthopedics and a woefully inadequate psychiatry-psychology section for a manual whose content is supposed to mirror ambulatory practice. Subungual hematoma, ingrown toenail, and heel pain, for example, are not included, whereas Peyronie's disease and strongyloidiasis are. Contraception, dysfunctional uterine bleeding, human immunodeficiency virus infection, and sexually transmitted disease guidelines are reasonably presented, although the latter represent the 1989 guidelines (before the new macrolide antibiotics).

Compared with Lange's similarly priced *Current Medical Diagnosis & Treatment*, this manual seems to have a more restricted content and smaller dimensions and type, but it can be arched and squeezed into a large pocket in a white coat. *Conn's Current Therapy*, published by Saunders, a hardback, costs about twice as much, a questionable expense because these volumes are outdated by the time they appear, but it is the most attractive and authoritative-appearing of these texts. *Manual of Clinical Problems in Adult Ambulatory Care* is the choice when portability is the overriding priority.

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Medicine. Third edition. *By Mark C. Fishman, Andrew R. Hoffman, Richard D. Klausner, and Malcolm S. Thaler. 555 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott, 1991. Price unknown (paper). ISBN 0-397-51028-4.*

This excellent review addresses current, basic general internal medicine. The authors cover only the nine traditional medical subspecialties (cardiology, pulmonary medicine, nephrology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, rheumatology, hematology, infectious diseases, and neurology) by presenting a limited, concise, clinically oriented review of commonly encountered areas in today's practice. Exemplified by the hypertension chapter, the etiology, differential diagnosis, and traditional, as well as recent, advances in treatment are all summarized in 10 pages of text. The text is clearly directed at answering the commonly asked questions, such as which patients should receive which medications first, whereas the esoteric is left to other textbooks.

The authors successfully accomplish their goal of elaborating on the abundance of new medical information by neither overgeneralizing nor oversimplifying. The prose is readable, and the busy practitioner will be able to move rapidly through a clinical section, such as the evaluation of a pulmonary nodule, and get right back to the patient waiting in the examination room. The use of charts, electrocardiograms, and radiographs, while somewhat limited, is quite useful.

The book is of particular value to those in family practice because there is clear emphasis on common internal medicine diagnoses. Yet, as in the example of the rheumatology chapter, the authors maintain a level of sophistication (e.g., a thorough discussion of antinuclear antibodies and their patterns) that prevents the reader from feeling the topics are addressed with excessive generality. This text can also be considered outstanding for the medical student as a first intro-

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