

pecially in topics dealing with chronic disease (diabetes, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy), are the lists of telephone numbers of support groups and additional reading directed to the concerned patient. Further references made available to the patient interested in major diagnostic categories would have been even more effective. Convenient for the physician and staff is that the 600 topics are presented in alphabetical order.

A 50-page appendix highlights various areas of patient interest, e.g., cast care, preventive care of the back, and basic physical therapy (low back pain, shoulder pain, knee disorders), and provides a childhood immunization review. A substantial supplementary section devotes another 50 pages to common diets, such as for reducing weight and cholesterol, avoiding food sensitivities, increasing fiber, maintaining potassium, providing good nutrition in pregnancy, and limiting sodium intake. Available also to the reader are 17 pages of unlabeled anatomical illustrations (middle ear, the skeleton, the heart) that can be modified appropriately to enhance take-home points.

Altogether, *Instructions for Patients* appears to be an effective patient education adjunct for the practicing physician to use at the conclusion of a professional encounter. The most noteworthy aspect of this collection is the publisher's eagerness to permit the reader unrestricted copying privileges. The indicated material can be quickly copied right in the office, much to patients' satisfaction. I have been quite pleased thus far in using *Instructions for Patients* in my clinical practice and, given the excellent feedback, plan to continue using these high-quality materials.

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**Manual of Admitting Orders and Therapeutics. Third edition.** By Eric B. Larson and W. Conrad Liles, Jr. 303 pp. Philadelphia, WB Saunders, 1994. \$23.95 (paper). ISBN 0-7216-5268-9.

This handbook is intended to teach medical students and perhaps junior housestaff how to write hospital admission orders in a more formalized teaching format than likely occurs at the current time. I think it succeeds well at achieving this goal. Importantly, in addition to listing the physician orders most often used for common and uncommon medical conditions, it provides a brief justification for each one. The medical conditions, drug doses, and physician orders are limited to adult medical and surgical patients. It is not written to include pediatric patients.

The book is divided into four sections: (1) philosophy and general approach to order writing; (2) admitting orders for specific medical conditions; (3) orders to accompany procedures, such as bronchoscopy, paracentesis, and streptokinase infusion; and (4) therapeutic agents. The sections are all equally helpful. The book is well indexed for ease in finding the topic of interest.

I put the book through its paces by letting my in-house team of family practice residents use it for two call nights each. They found it helpful, especially the junior residents. One senior resident sheepishly admitted that it reminded him of something that was important that he would have likely forgotten.

Manuals of this type, I believe, are helpful to use much as a pilot would use a preflight checklist. It allows medical students to feel secure that they are not forgetting anything important. It will not help readers make a diagnosis — that is not its purpose — but it will help them learn the important task of writing orders in a sensible and standardized fashion.

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**Physical Diagnosis: Bedside Evaluation of Diagnosis and Function.** By Janice L. Willms, Henry Schneideman, and Paula S. Algranati. 804 pp., illustrated. Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins, 1994. \$48. ISBN 0-683-09110-7.

In the Preface of the book, the authors discuss their frustration at the lack of a textbook that would parallel the progressive building blocks of basic science and clinical information as they are sequentially acquired in the medical education process. Many of us who have organized and taught at various levels in medical education can empathize with that frustration. We have made up our own syllabi to teach the introduction to clinical skills and have utilized various texts to supplement this information. The authors have done an excellent job in accomplishing their goal of presenting the information sequentially in modules appropriate to the knowledge base of the learner.

In reviewing the book, I was especially impressed with the authors' inclusion and emphasis on the conduct and the process of the interview, as well as the content. Attention to the physical arrangements, introductions, and verbal and nonverbal behaviors is discussed. Those of us who have some years of practice behind us recognize the value of these items. The content sections are also well done, including the section on family history that recommends a genogram as well as a search for common, recurring familial patterns. Important concerns, such as problems created by being sick, behavioral styles, and methods to cope with sensitive data acquisition, are also included.

The book is organized so that a section in each chapter addresses a *screening examination* and another an *extended examination*. The authors chose to present the material by anatomic regions rather than by physiologic systems. They also make suggestions for handling unusual but difficult situations or settings that demand special approaches or modification of standard interviewing or physical examination procedures. They have included sample written reports at the end of each chapter to help the student record information. Another useful addition is a section entitled *Beyond the Physical Examination* in which the authors

list appropriate laboratory studies, imaging, functional studies, and suggestions for consultation input. These practical sections will help the beginning student link clinical findings with further problem-solving information.

I found the quality and extent of illustrations to be excellent. Each chapter has anatomic drawings of the organs involved and pictures of these organs superimposed on a person's body. Pictures are used to demonstrate various tests to indicate placement of one's hand or instrument, as well as proper position of the patient for a valid examination.

Although the audience best served by this book will be the neophyte student, it would be a valuable addition to all physicians' libraries. As we are role models for students in our offices, we would do well to brush up on our clinical skills periodically. At the beginning of the book, the authors issue an invitation for anyone to contribute to the continued improvement of the text by writing their suggestions and sending them to the authors. I found only a few places that I could enlarge on this very well organized and valuable text.

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