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BOOK REVIEW

Cardiovascular Medicine. James T. Willerson, Jay N. Cohn, Hein J.J. Wellens, David R. Holmes, Jr. (Eds.). Springer (2007). 2926 pp., ISBN-13: 978 1 84628 1884

Cardiovascular Medicine is an impressive comprehensive review of cardiovascular diseases. At 2926 pages and weighing 12.2 pounds, it is a mighty tome that covers all aspects of cardiovascular disease — from the cardiac physical examination, congenital heart diseases and preventive cardiology to the genetic basis of cardiovascular diseases.

For this third edition, Willerson and Cohn have enlisted the help of two additional editors who are world authorities in clinical electrophysiology and interventional cardiology, Hein J. J. Wellens and David R. Holmes Jr., respectively. This has resulted in 27 new chapters and a 30% expansion and update of the previous content. Each chapter is written by a recognized expert in the field. The list of contributing authors totals over 150 international experts from North America, Europe, and Asia.

Cardiovascular Medicine is divided into 13 sections and further subdivided into 136 chapters. The first section is an introduction to basic cardiac anatomy and embryology, cardiac signs and symptoms, as well as selected noninvasive diagnostic tests, including newer modalities, such as cardiovascular magnetic resonance imaging and computed tomographic cardiovascular imaging.

As more children with surgically corrected congenital heart disease are surviving into adulthood, adult cardiologists will encounter more of these patients in their practice. The second section addresses these concerns, beginning with a beautifully written chapter by noted cardiovascular pathologists, Robert H. Anderson and Anton E. Becker on normal and abnormal anatomy. The visual material in this chapter is outstanding. There are colored anatomical diagrams, exceptional examples of pathological dissections, and intraoperative photographs, which are all well annotated and accompanied by clear and precise text to help the reader understand salient normal anatomical features as well as complexities of the congenitally malformed heart.

There are 27 extensive chapters devoted to coronary artery disease, which discuss the pathophysiology of the vulnerable plaque, coronary physiology, biomarkers of inflammation and lead into the global epidemiology of atherosclerosis and clinical recognition of coronary disease. There are individual chapters dedicated to different diagnostic tests used in the evaluation of coronary disease, from exercise testing, echocardiography and myocardial SPECT imaging to newer technologies such as cardiac positron emission tomography and magnetic resonance angiography. The second half of the section includes chapters on the medical, surgical, and percutaneous treatment of coronary artery disease, including a chapter specifically on drug-eluting stents.

The last section focuses on preventive cardiology and consists of twelve chapters, which study the relationship between cardiovascular disease and exercise, smoking, dyslipidemias, erectile dysfunction, obesity, and renal disease. There are also chapters, which introduce the clinician to the basics of gene therapy, molecular biology, and stem cell therapy for cardiovascular diseases.

There are equally expansive sections covering valvular disease, myocardial disease, vascular disease, basic electrophysiology, and cardiac effects of systemic disease, pregnancy, and aging.

The third edition is accompanied by an invaluable DVD-ROM that consists of the entire content of the book in a PDF format, a collection of heart sounds, and a library of echocardiography video clips that complement echocardiographic images in the book. The medical student or cardiovascular trainee will most certainly appreciate the over 100 digitally recorded heart sounds and murmurs, which can be played with optional clear and concise narration by Dr. Daniel Mason. This DVD-ROM is an indispensable resource for trainees and clinicians who wish to improve their proficiency in

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cardiac auscultation or echocardiographic interpretation.

Ischemic cardiovascular disease is the most important health care problem that westernized countries face in the 21st century. As the rates of obesity and diabetes soar, especially in developing nations such as China and India, the global burden of cardiovascular disease will increase at an alarming rate. According to the World Health Organization, cardiovascular disease accounts for 30% of all global deaths (WHO, Cardiovascular diseases. World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/cardiovascular_diseases/en/>; 2008 [accessed 13.07.08]). There will be a greater demand for all health care specialists to become familiar and remain up to date with the pathophysiology, diagnosis, and management of common, and sometimes not so common, cardiovascular diseases.

Willerson et al. have performed a commendable job of putting together an outstanding comprehensive reference book, which is easy to read, well referenced, and well organized. Over 1800 images are included to illustrate concepts introduced in the text. *Cardiovascular Medicine* will appeal to anyone who is interested in cardiovascular diseases and is a worthwhile addition to the library of any cardiologist, cardiovascular trainee, or general internist who has a particular interest in cardiology.

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