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Cardiovascular Drugs and the Management of Heart Disease

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published records of the AMA. This book is a fine introduction to the early history of osteopathy, and it must be the starting point for persons seeking to understand the changing relationship between orthodox medicine and osteopathy. It seems safe to predict that this book will be much discussed, by osteopaths, by orthodox physicians, by officers of state and national medical organizations, and by specialists in the history and sociology of medicine.

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Cardiovascular Drugs

Cardiovascular Drugs and the Management of Heart Disease, edited by Gordon A. Ewy and Rubin Bressler, 752 pp, with illus, \$68, New York, Raven Press, 1982.

The prolific introduction of new drugs and therapies makes the task of writing a book that is current on the management of heart disease and cardiovascular drugs a most challenging undertaking. The medicine, cardiology, and pharmacology sections of the University of Arizona, Tucson, have undertaken this challenge. The authors include 22 persons affiliated with the University of Arizona and five others.

The book is divided into useful sections, including principles of drug therapy, specific drugs, and chapters emphasizing basic topics in cardiovascular disease, including ischemic heart disease, valvular heart disease, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, congestive heart failure, and other topics. Each chapter is introduced by a concise and useful summary, and the subject index is thorough, allowing ready access to information.

With the diffuse range of therapies and cardiovascular drugs originating from multiple investigators across the country, one looks forward to reading these concise reviews. However, the book lacks breadth in comparison with several major textbooks currently available in the field of pharmacology and cardiology. The authors have only in part accomplished their goal in writing a book that integrates pharmacology and cardiology. Excellent chapters include one on drug use in elderly patients, which addresses a universal and often unappreciated subject, and those on individual drugs. Select sections dealing with the primary research interests of the authors are outstanding. For example, the excellence of chapters on hypertension, defibrillation, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation is most likely caused by the authors' research participation in these areas.

Nevertheless, many chapters are limited by the paucity of original contribution, as evidenced in the general absence of the author's own references for each chapter.

Certain outdated recommendations, such as edrophonium chloride as a first-line drug for paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia as opposed to verapamil, are flagrant examples of outdated sections. Newer therapeutic modalities such as calcium channel blockers, streptokinase for acute coronary occlusion, angioplasty, additional investigational antiarrhythmics, and investigational positive inotropic agents receive superficial and at times outdated attention. The authors can hardly be blamed for this latter deficiency, because these are only evolving therapies. Nevertheless, this detracts from the usefulness of the book.

More authors with a leadership role in their fields of interest would have minimized these oversights and placed some topics in better perspective. For example, treatment of uncomplicated myocardial infarction with propranolol receives considerable endorsement while coronary angiography and surgery for stable angina pectoris seem to receive conservative endorsement. Therefore, the volume may suffer somewhat from a regional bias.

Conversely, the approach to most cardiovascular problems is acceptable and reasonable, especially for the generalist not interested in subtle controversy or more recent developments. The work is not comprehensive or foresighted enough to serve as the primary reference source in the field. However, it can be considered a useful supplement or introductory volume in the field of cardiovascular pharmacology.

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Life Extension

Life Extension: A Practical Scientific Approach, by Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw, 858 pp, with illus, \$22.50, New York, Warner Books, 1982.

It is important for physicians to be aware of the contents of *Life Extension* in order to properly counsel their patients who have bought this best sellers' list book. Unusual symptoms, requests for extensive laboratory testing, and appeals for unrequired prescription drugs should alert physicians that their patients may be under the dangerous illusion that long life and good health can be

achieved simply by swallowing the unsound advice of "Durk and Sandy."

The jacket photograph of the two authors of this 858-page tome is designed so that prospective buyers will believe that the young, long-haired, unconventional-looking duo have combined laboratory and ultra-modern technology skills (Durk is holding a beaker in an arm swathed in Indian jewelry, Sandy is holding a computer printout, and the screen on their home computer module is aglow with figures) to come up with the way to "enjoy the pleasure and stamina, the vitality and strength, of youth—longer." A mere \$22.50 does not seem like an outrageous fee "for anyone . . . who seeks greater youthfulness" to shell out for advice on the accomplishment of the following elusive feats: "slowing your own aging while improving your current health, mental abilities, sexual function and pleasure . . . getting most of the benefits of exercise in a few minutes per day . . . reducing your risks from smoking and drinking, even if you don't quit."

The authors (who prefer to be called by their first names) each have an undergraduate degree in science, but discontinued formal education in favor of self-experimentation and self-directed research. Durk and Sandy are not at all shy about allowing the public to examine their personal lives, including dietary habits, exercise techniques (with several center-folds of the two, scantily clad, posed in body-building stances), and sex life. But in sharing their own anti-aging program with readers, Durk and Sandy have enough foresight to caution us with dozens of disclaimers, including following:

The use of prescription drugs and large doses of nutrients for the improvement of health in normal people is still experimental. Some applications of scientific findings we report are based on results in a small number of people. Be sure to have regular clinical laboratory tests if you plan to experiment with any of these substances yourself. . . . None of the nutrients and prescription drugs we use are [Food and Drug Administration] FDA-approved as a therapy for life extension. . . . Do not imagine that any of our suggestions can substitute for your doctor's treatment of serious disorders . . . do not stop your prescribed medications, and make sure you consult your doctor about adding our suggestions!

The "How to Use This Book" section invites readers to devise their own individual life-extension program—by browsing through the book and applying selective "anti-aging,