Renovascular Hypertension: Pathophysiology, Diagnosis and Treatment, edited Nicola Glorioso, John H. Laragh, and Alessandro Rappelli (Raven).

This book is a collection of papers presented at an international symposium held in Stintino, Italy, in September 1985. While current estimates suggest that the incidence of renovascular hypertension among hypertensive populations to be approximately 0.5%, it is likely that the incidence will increase in decades to come as our population ages. Thus, renovascular hypertension has generated intense interest among researchers and clinicians, most of which has been directed toward a better understanding of the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone cascade.

The text illustrates progress made from the original observations of Dr. Harry Goldblatt of Cleveland in 1934. The scope of understanding of the RAA system has been expanded to include its actions affecting vascular smooth muscle, the kidney, the sympathetic nervous system, and the central nervous system.

For readers with a more basic interest in the biochemical and physiological aspects of renovascular hypertension, the first portion of this book provides a series of suitable reviews that summarize observations of the role of vasoconstrictor and vasodilator substances, including the implications of atrial natriuretic factor in experimental and human hypertension. The ability of renal efferent nerves to control sodium excretion, alter intrarenal hemodynamics, and stimulate renin release is discussed, as well as the hypothesis that the ischemia induced by renal artery stenosis may induce release of humoral substances and activate afferent sympathetic nerves. Data are reviewed to suggest that the reflex control of renin release may be effectively modulated via cardiopulmonary receptors in renovascular hypertension. Evidence is presented to suggest that the renal nerves can exert a direct action on proximal tubular reabsorption of sodium and water. Several chapters address renal hemodynamic measurements, including responses following transluminal angioplasty.

The second portion of the book includes authoritative reviews dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of renovascular hypertension. In particular, the role of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors both in diagnosis and management is addressed in detail. Finally, the readers find authoritative reviews of the treatment of renovascular hypertension, including medical aspects, percutaneous transluminal renal angioplasty, and surgical revascularization.

Whether the reader's interests lie with the more basic aspects of renovascular hypertension or clinical aspects of diagnostics and therapy, *Renovascular Hypertension* should prove interesting. The management sections of the text will impress readers with the need for controlled clinical trials of medical *vs* interventive therapy.

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Popular Nutritional Practices: A Scientific Appraisal, by Jack Z. Yetiv (Popular Medicine).

Clinicians are frequently faced with patients who have misconceptions about nutrition and are thus attracted to fad diets and untested nutritional approaches purported to be solutions to complicated and unsolved medical problems such as obesity, atherosclerosis, or cancer. *Popular Nutritional Practices* is for the health professional unable to keep up with the large volume of related literature and the lay person who wishes to know the basis of currently accepted nutritional practice. It is difficult to write one book for both groups, however. Portions of the text devoted to discussions of the scientific method and the deficiencies of various cult and nonscientific approaches to health may be appropriate for the general public but tedious for the scientifically trained professional.

The first third of the book shows how the scientific method has been used to evaluate various regimens involving Laetrile, starch blockers, and herbal remedies. Included in this section is an evaluation of alternative health care techniques (Christian Science, iridology, homeopathy, and chiropractic). The remaining two thirds of the book deals with lipids, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and nutritional aspects of hypertension and obesity.

A large amount of information has been distilled by the author and is presented in a short and readable publication. For those who seek more in-depth information, the book contains numerous references to articles and reviews in journals such as the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *JAMA*.

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Continuing Medical Education: A Primer, by Adrienne B. Rosof and William C. Felch (Praeger).

This book lives up to its billing as a "primer." It provides a foundation of information about continuing medical education (CME) that could prove useful