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DIAGNOSTIC ENDOCRINOLOGY

Edited by W. Tabb Moore, MD, and Richard C. Eastman, MD
BC Decker

This textbook brings the newer aspects of endocrinology into clear focus for the practicing clinician and student. It is a multi-authored text with references dated to the late 1980s, and it covers the major areas of endocrinology in reasonable depth.

The major intent of *Diagnostic Endocrinology* is to emphasize pathophysiology and to outline in a concise fashion the use and interpretation of laboratory tests. The stage is set in the first chapters, which emphasize the use of decision analysis to assess sensitivity and specificity of laboratory tests. In another early chapter, the authors elucidate the newer techniques of competitive binding assays. Although testing sensitivity and specificity is meant to be the basis for subsequent chapters related to endocrine measurements, not all chapters achieve this intent.

Each chapter includes an outline of important laboratory tests, along with methods of analysis, normal ranges, uses, and problems. Information about each test in every area of endocrinology is summarized in tables; this is very useful for the reader, and minimizes the need to search for information in the text.

Three chapters are especially noteworthy. One provides a liberally illustrated description of fine needle aspiration of the thyroid. Another is devoted to the theory of nuclear imaging and the use of this technology in evaluating the thyroid and adrenal glands, and bone mineral content. Also of value is the chapter that discusses computed tomographic and magnetic resonance imaging techniques for the pituitary.

The textbook is well written and consistent throughout in its effort to concentrate on pathophysiology and interpretation of laboratory tests. It provides minimal information on therapy, but this is a minor criticism. The book is a fresh approach that will appeal to those interested in endocrinology. It is the kind of text that will be well accepted and, more important, used frequently.

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AIRWAY RESPONSIVENESS AND ATOPY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE

Edited by Scott T. Weiss, MD, MS, and David Sparrow, DSc
Raven Press

Airway Responsiveness and Atopy in the Development of Chronic Lung Disease is a collection of critical reviews that examine the role of airway hyperreactivity and atopy as risk factors for the development of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Early chapters are devoted to the pathophysiology of airway hyperreactivity, the immunology of the allergic response, and methods of airway responsiveness testing and assessment of atopy. These discussions set the stage for two especially useful chapters on allergy and airway obstruction. The two closing chapters examine airway responsiveness and atopy in occupational lung disease and cystic fibrosis.

The authors are leading investigators of the epidemiology and physiology of COPD. They are even-handed in their discussion of relevant issues, including the Dutch and British hypotheses regarding the development of COPD. The chapter by Dr. Burrows is a particularly clear and comprehensive exposition of the hypotheses, and critically weighs the evidence for both.

Although some redundancy is inevitable in a multi-authored text that covers closely related topics in 10 chapters, the redundant discussions (for example, the natural history of COPD and figures from the British Transport Workers Study) are minimal and unobtrusive, reflecting careful editing and organization.

Airway Responsiveness and Atopy in the Development of Chronic Lung Disease can be considered a primer for the investigator entering this controversial field or for the sophisticated student who needs a critical road map to this body of literature. The chapters on the natural history of COPD will be especially useful to clinicians.

The book will be an invaluable addition to the bookshelves of active and aspiring investigators, and to academic medical libraries.

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