



## Dear Colleague:

IT HAS BEEN ALMOST A YEAR since we increased the number of issues of the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine* published each year, and improved the design of the publication. In this issue, we fine-tune some of the design elements, but we hope that the basic mix of articles is interesting and informative for a wide variety of readers. We have been gratified by the positive response from many of our readers, and hope to continue improving the *Journal*.

### ■ Beta blockers and heart failure (page 415)

Although early trials of beta blockers in heart failure were disappointing, a newly approved drug, carvedilol, is rekindling interest in this approach. Dr. Young discusses why some beta blockers may be useful as an adjunct in treating heart failure.

### ■ Elderly drivers (page 423)

Is it safe for elderly drivers to be on the road? Find out how to evaluate your elderly patients to determine if it is safe for them to continue driving. Dr. Foley and Mr. Mitchell discuss the importance of the problem and describe an approach to assessment.

### ■ Intensive glycemic control (page 410)

Dr. Eastman examines the question of how cost-effective intensive glycemic control is in patients with diabetes. He points out that the cost per life year gained of just under \$20,000 is well within the range considered to be cost effective in other conditions, such as liver transplantation where it may go as high as \$100,000.

### ■ Treatment of claudication (page 429)

Intermittent claudication is a disabling problem for many older Americans. It can often be treated conservatively, as pointed out by Dr. Gray, who describes a logical therapeutic decision process for this condition.

### ■ Panic disorder (page 437)

Panic disorder is common and often causes physical symptoms that resemble organic disease. Drs. Muzina and Malone review the characteristic features, current theory about the role of neurotransmitters in pathogenesis, and available treatments of panic disorder.

### ■ Low back pain (page 407)

Low back pain is one of the most frequent and frustrating problems confronting patients and their physicians. Dr. Mazanec outlines a practical and cost-effective approach that is the basis for most present-day back pain practice guidelines.

### ■ Internal Medicine Board Review (page 403)

Drs. Abdel-Razeq and Bolwell outline the appropriate approach to the rather common incidental finding of a previously unsuspected paraprotein.

As always we are interested in what you think of the *Journal*, and your ideas for future topics.

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