

was to provide a clinical text on laser therapy; other books can provide detailed information on fundamentals and physics of laser. The list of references following each chapter directs the reader to a more detailed investigation of selected topics.

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CLINICAL ENDOCRINOLOGY OF CALCIUM METABOLISM

edited by T. John Martin and Lawrence G. Raisz
Marcel Dekker

A well-written summary of the clinical problems encountered in this field, this textbook provides an introduction to modern biology of calcium regulation and bone metabolism and then presents discussions on disorders of the parathyroid glands, vitamin D, calcitonin and medullary thyroid cancer, skeletal disorders of osteoporosis, osteogenesis imperfecta, Paget's disease, renal disease, and childhood disorders.

The first chapter, highlighting present-day knowledge of the molecular biology of bone metabolism and biochemistry and renal and intestinal regulation of calcium handling, is as fine a summary of this topic as can be found. Succeeding chapters concentrate on clinical aberrations of calcium metabolism. The chapter on parathyroid problems is a well-referenced discussion of state-of-the-art knowledge of the clinical and biochemical aspects of this disorder. However, it lacks a discussion of pseudohyperparathyroidism of aluminum bone disease, which should have been included here as well as in the chapter on renal disorders. A discussion of vitamin D problems employs a useful approach by juxtaposing biochemical knowledge of metabolic pathways with descriptions of the clinical disorders. An extensive discussion of calcitonin and medullary carcinoma touches briefly upon type II multiple endocrine neoplasia. A useful clinical classification of hypercalcemia of malignancy and its treatment complements the section about the molecular mechanisms causing the disorder.

The discussion of osteoporosis of aging is extensive and includes an assessment of the etiological factors of nutrition and lifestyle as well as speculation on newly discovered humoral factors. There is also a concise presentation of diagnostic modalities and treatment. The chapter dealing with osteogenesis imperfecta follows the same style of presentation; however, there is less basic science. This chapter complements the one on mineral

metabolism in children, which discusses neonatal hypocalcemia and hypercalcemia, rickets, and congenital osteoporosis. This section particularly is well-referenced and also includes therapeutic suggestions. Renal osteodystrophy is covered briefly, but there is an extensive discussion of nephrolithiasis and an abbreviated one on other renal tubular disorders. The final chapter contains information about etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of Paget's disease of bone.

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YOUR GUT FEELINGS: A COMPLETE GUIDE TO LIVING BETTER WITH INTESTINAL PROBLEMS

by Henry D. Janowitz
Oxford University Press

The title suggests a dissertation on how to cope with intestinal problems. In fact, the text provides an excellent scientific guide to gastrointestinal disorders for the layperson by covering a wide range of symptoms from gas to bleeding.

The first of 14 chapters is a concise, extremely well-written overview of anatomy and physiology. The choice of words is ingenious (the bowel is a "hydraulic system" and "a conveyor belt," lower abdominal pain is "downstairs" pain, and upper abdominal pain is "upper-story" pain) and the diagrams are helpful.

The next five chapters cover the major gastrointestinal diseases: irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, changes in bowel habits and bleeding, polyps and cancer, and diverticulosis. The rest of the book is devoted to less well-known problems such as food allergy, the effect of systemic illness and drugs on the bowel, and the role of psychological factors. Abdominal pain is covered in a separate chapter, and curiously, intestinal gas is discussed between the chapters on medications and the one on sexually transmitted diseases. This reviewer would have preferred to see intestinal gas addressed in the context of irritable bowel syndrome.

Generally, the language is quite simple and easy to read. The content, however, tends to get overly complex. For instance, the concept of secretory diarrhea is not too helpful, and I don't know why the layperson should spend energy understanding eosinophilic gastroenteritis. These are, however, minor details since all gastrointestinal disorders are addressed with skill, clarity, and a reassuring tone.