

quiring hospitalization. A self-supporting comprehensive breast center would have to be organized along different lines. A more detailed review of both the Michigan center and the national scene would have been valuable.

Considering that this volume resulted from a conference, it is well edited, with a minimum of repetition. The fourth section brings together a variety of psychosocial issues that have received too little emphasis in books dealing with breast cancer. The chapter by Rose Kushner, in another section, provides significant insight to all physicians engaged in helping patients with breast cancer.

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## DIABETES AND ITS OCULAR COMPLICATIONS

William E. Benson, Gary C. Brown, and William Tasman  
W. B. Saunders

Diabetic retinopathy is quickly becoming one of the most vision-threatening disorders. The explosion of information about this entity is evidenced by the hundreds of publications pertaining to this subject. An impressive amount of new information on managing this entity is due to the advent of new therapies, including laser treatment and vitrectomy surgery.

This overview of diabetic retinopathy includes demography, contributing environmental and systemic factors, and genetic factors. A discussion of the pathogenesis of tissue damage and the blood state in the diabetic patient as they relate to development of diabetic retinopathy is excellent. The psychophysical and electrophysiological abnormalities, as well as the significance of the abnormal blood-retina barrier, are also described.

A reading of the section on clinical findings is worthwhile not only for the ophthalmologist but for general practitioners, internists, and diabetologists. There is an excellent examination of the various medical modalities and the various controlled studies pertaining to diabetic retinopathy. Additional conditions involving the eye are also discussed. The beneficial role of laser and vitrectomy surgery is well covered.

This brief text is an excellent primer not only for ophthalmology residents, but also for special fellows and ophthalmologists in general, regardless of specialization. In addition, it's an excellent reference for internists, medical students, and diabetologists. The book certainly

deserves a place in every library. Drs. Benson, Brown, and Tasman are to be congratulated on this timely, well-documented, and very useful text.

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## CHILDHOOD ASTHMA: PATHOPHYSIOLOGY AND TREATMENT

Edited by David G. Tinkelman, Constantine J. Falliers,  
and Charles K. Naspitz  
Marcel Dekker

As evidenced by this good-sized text and its hundreds of references, the medical and basic science literature on the topic of asthma grows with quickening pace. It has become most difficult to stay abreast of discoveries and theories on the pathophysiology of this disease. Then too, as the array of drugs available for treating asthma expands, so does uncertainty over best choices for first-line and multi-drug regimens.

The editors have brought together the expertise of numerous researchers and clinicians to cover the scope of current understanding of childhood asthma, from the laboratory bench to the bedside. In the first several chapters, discussion of lung defenses, lung injury, mediators of inflammation, and pathophysiologic mechanisms holds the clinician's attention by frequent reference to the clinical implications of these chemical and cellular processes.

The more practical matters of diagnosis and treatment are the focus of the latter two-thirds of the book. Herein lies this book's potential for significant impact on the way physicians manage the asthmatic child. With the aid of some excellent tables and lists, the text carefully describes the complete work-up of the child who wheezes.

Following a textual description of the various available drugs and their modes of action, algorithms for treating acute and chronic asthma are offered. So applied, these are effective learning tools. Other strengths are the chapters that cover nonpharmacologic approaches to and psychologic aspects of asthma—topics that are of growing importance as asthma becomes correctly viewed as a chronic rather than an episodic disease.

For a book with multiple authors, there is surprisingly little overlap in content. Clear subheadings in each chapter make locating topics simple, enhancing the text's utility. The index is brief but adequate. References are extensive and include literature to within a year of publication (1987).