

Medical Insights

From Classroom to Patient

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Dedication

To my wife, Louise, and to the memory of our parents, Ann and Paul Diamond and Frances and Irving Goldman.



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Preface

Traditional textbooks are exhaustive in content. Yet, their *strength* is their *weakness*. In an effort to present the voluminous material in a logical fashion, the books are, most frequently, organized by functional systems, e.g., gastroenterology, cardiology, and endocrinology. It is unavoidable that presented information becomes fragmented and, therefore, difficult for the student to understand and retain. For example, ptosis, drooping of the eyelid, is presented in the following chapters in a medicine text: pulmonary (bronchogenic carcinoma), autoimmune diseases (myasthenia gravis), neurology (intracranial aneurysm), endocrinology (diabetes mellitus), infectious disease (Lyme disease), and diseases of unknown etiology (sarcoidosis).

This book is not a textbook. It is not designed to present voluminous information. Rather, it is a book designed to express a clinician's *approach to medical thinking in the diagnosis and management of the patient*. Voluminous and disjointed information is distilled into a more easily understood format.

Let us return to the earlier example, ptosis. In this book, the subject of ptosis is succinctly presented, in a clinically relevant and easy-to-understand manner. What are the 3 questions, all quickly answered on physical examination, that enable the clinician to quickly determine the cause of ptosis? Is the ptosis greater (or less) than 3 mm? What is the pupil size of the affected eye? Are the extraocular eye movements normal on the affected side?

Chapters are not organized by organ systems. Rather, their titles represent the thinking of the clinician. Chapter titles include:

- Medical Brevities
- The Most Important Word in Diagnosis: *And*
- MEDIC and a Word on Drug Interactions
- Stop . . . and Think
- Always and Never

- Linkages
- The Smartest Answer to a Medical Question: “It Depends”
- Clinical Potpourri

The chapter titles express the theme of this book, to collate medical information in a clinically relevant and understandable format. Principles of therapy are emphasized. However, specific details in clinical pharmacology and disease treatment have been eschewed in order to avoid an expansive dimension to the book.

It would be most satisfying to me if the reader finds this book to be valuable in patient care and, at the same time, pleasurable reading.



About the Author

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