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SYNOPSIS OF
DISEASES
OF THE CHEST

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PREFACE

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J. C. S.

In the preface to the second edition of our book *Diagnosis of Diseases of the Chest* published in 1977/78, we commented on the vast amount of new knowledge that had accumulated since the publication of the first edition in 1970 and on the resultant expansion of the book from two to four volumes. At the time, we recognized the risk that the book might become purely a reference work but remained hopeful that its organization would enable readers to be highly selective in the material they wished to read, thus preserving the textbook perspective. This has proven not to be the case: the more than 2300 pages of text have proven a formidable barrier to its acceptance as a tome to be read and digested from cover to cover. As a result, we recognized the need for a book that could be used as a text and yet would include information sufficient to a basic understanding of chest disease. Thus was born the idea of a synopsis, an abbreviated coverage of chest disease aimed at the resident in respiratory medicine or radiology, the senior medical student, or any physician or surgeon seeking a concise review of the subject.

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The experience of writing the second edition taught us that the addition of new material to a book can be relatively straightforward; since there are few limitations placed on authors by the publisher, length is seldom a problem. By contrast, condensing manuscript can be a formidable task, as we soon discovered, and the abridgment of four volumes to one has proven to be a four-year undertaking. Not only has it been necessary to sacrifice much material—to “separate the wheat from the chaff”—but also to update virtually all sections of the book by adding new material that has appeared in the literature since 1978, compounding the effort to keep the book as short as possible. The 19 chapters in this book follow the same order as the major work, which we hope will make it easy to locate an expanded version of any subject in the four-volume set, if desired. The subdivision of virtually all descriptions of chest disease into etiology, pathogenesis, pathologic characteristics, roentgenographic manifestations, and clinical manifestations has been adhered to, permitting readers to cull the material appropriate to their discipline.

The last chapter is dedicated to tables of differential diagnosis and “decision trees.” For purposes of brevity, only nine of 17 tables of differential diagnosis listed in the larger work have been included, comprising those patterns of disease that we have assumed offer the greatest challenge in differential diagnosis. Each table provides a nosologic approach to the differential diagnosis of disease of that pattern, including only minimal reference to clinical status. The decision trees that follow each table introduce into the diagnostic equation the clinical presentation of the patient, affording the reader an opportunity to correlate roentgenographic pattern with clinical signs and symptoms in order to reach the most likely diagnosis.

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Since our intention has been to produce a textbook rather than a reference work, we have been very selective in our choice of referenced material, restricting the bibliography to those articles and books that we regarded as most essential for further reading on specific topics. Bibliographies have been placed at the end of each chapter. Illustrations have been reduced in both size and number to reveal only essential features of roentgenographic abnormality. Figures depicting normal and pathologic anatomy of the thorax by computed tomography were few in number

in *Diagnosis of Diseases of the Chest*, an omission that has been corrected in *Synopsis*.

We have been concerned for many years with the wide range of terminology employed by physicians in the description of roentgenographic abnormalities in the thorax. In order to clarify the confusion, the Fleischner Society formed a Committee on Nomenclature several years ago that designed a glossary of roentgenologic words and terms. This task is nearing completion, and, with the permission of the Fleischner Society, we are including at the end of this book a glossary of selected words that we hope our readers will refer to and use.

Finally, we invite our readers to inform us of differences of opinion they may have with the contents of this book. It is only through such interchange of information and opinion that we can hope to establish on a firm basis the knowledge necessary for a full understanding of respiratory disease.

J. A. PETER PARÉ
ROBERT G. FRASER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of this book has required almost four years—a period of tedium and stoicism mixed with gratification. As might be expected in a task requiring the abridgment of a manuscript to approximately one-quarter its original size, the labor has been chiefly ours. However, the many steps necessary to the final product required the unselfish and enthusiastic contributions of several hands and minds, and the support and encouragement we received from many of our friends are duly acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

It is not possible to overstate our gratitude to our secretaries, who handled magnificently the tedious and necessarily exacting task of transcribing new manuscript and who cheerfully coped with all of the innumerable problems encountered. Mrs. Maria Karpowicz and Ms. Anna-Maria Messenzehl of the Montreal Chest Hospital Center and the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and Miss Sheila Walker and Mrs. Carolyn Bryant of the University of Alabama Medical Center in Birmingham all exhibited exemplary patience and devotion in accomplishing this thorny chore. Miss Walker and Mrs. Bryant also carried out the tedious job of recording, filing, checking, and final validation of all references, a frustrating chore that they performed with meticulous accuracy.

Although the majority of illustrations were lifted from the second edition of *Diagnosis of Diseases of the Chest*, the few new figures required the superb photographic work of Susan Gray of the Department of Radiology, University of Alabama Medical Center in Birmingham. Joanne Fraser did much of the art work for the CT figures.

Throughout our labors, we have received tremendous support and cooperation from the publishers, notably Ms. Suzanne Boyd and Mr. Jack Hanley, who affectively and sympathetically minimized the many obstacles we encountered.

Finally, and with immense gratitude, we recall the patience and understanding displayed by our wives and children throughout our labors. Without their continuous encouragement, this book surely would not have been completed, and we acknowledge their many virtues with much love.

J. A. PETER PARÉ
ROBERT G. FRASER

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1

THE NORMAL CHEST	1
The Airways and Pulmonary Ventilation.....	1
The Conductive Zone.....	1
The Transitory Zone.....	6
The Respiratory Zone.....	7
The Lung Unit.....	14
Roentgenology of the Airways.....	19
The Lobar Bronchial Segments.....	21
Function of the Airways: Pulmonary Ventilation.....	30
The Pulmonary Vascular System.....	36
Morphology of the Vascular System.....	36
Roentgenology of the Vascular System.....	38
Function of the Vascular System.....	42
Nonrespiratory Functions of the Lung.....	58
Development of the Lung.....	60
The Nervous System.....	62
The Pleura.....	63
Morphology.....	63
Roentgenology.....	63
Physiology.....	65
The Lymphatic System.....	67
Lymphatics of the Lungs and Pleura.....	67
The Thoracic Duct and Right Lymphatic Duct.....	67
Lymphatics of the Mediastinum.....	68
Patterns of Lymphatic Drainage of the Lungs.....	71
The Mediastinum.....	72
Mediastinal Compartments.....	73
Mediastinal Pleural Reflections.....	74
The Diaphragm.....	85
The Chest Wall.....	86
The Normal Chest Roentgenogram.....	87
Perception in Chest Roentgenology.....	95
References.....	97

2

METHODS OF ROENTGENOLOGIC AND PATHOLOGIC INVESTIGATION	101
Roentgenologic Examination.....	101
Standard Roentgenography.....	101
Roentgenologic Procedures for the Evaluation of Intrathoracic Dynamics.....	105
Standard Tomography.....	105
Computerized Tomography (CT).....	107
Bronchography.....	109
Angiography.....	110
Contrast Studies by Gas Insufflation.....	111

Roentgenologic Methods in the Assessment of Lung Function	111
Lung Scanning	112
Diagnostic Ultrasound	114
Mass Chest Roentgenography as a Screening Procedure	116
Pathologic Examination	116
Methods of Pathologic Examination (Cytology)	116
Methods of Pathologic Examination (Biopsy)	117
Methods for Pathologic Examination (Necropsy)	123
References	123

3 METHODS IN CLINICAL, LABORATORY, AND FUNCTIONAL INVESTIGATION

Clinical History	125
Symptoms of Respiratory Disease	125
Past Illnesses and Personal History	129
Physical Examination	130
Methods of Examination and Significant Chest Signs	130
Extrathoracic Manifestations of Pulmonary Disease	133
Special Diagnostic Procedures	134
Endoscopic Examination	134
Bacteriology in Pulmonary Disease	135
Serologic and Skin Tests	141
Hematologic Procedures in Lung Disease	148
Electrocardiography	148
Pulmonary Function Tests	148
References	162

4 ROENTGENOLOGIC SIGNS IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF CHEST DISEASE

Lung Diseases that Increase Roentgenographic Density	164
Predominantly Air-Space Disease	164
Roentgenologic Signs of Atelectasis	178
Predominantly Interstitial Disease	188
Combined Consolidation, Atelectasis, and Interstitial Disease	194
General Signs in Disease that Increase Roentgenographic Density	195
Line Shadows	206
Lung Diseases that Decrease Roentgenographic Density	212
Roentgenologic Signs	214
Roentgenologic Signs of Pleural Disease	225
Roentgenologic Signs of Pleural Effusion	226
Roentgenologic Signs of Pleural Thickening	231
Roentgenologic Signs of Pneumothorax	232
References	234

5 PULMONARY ABNORMALITIES OF DEVELOPMENTAL ORIGIN

Bronchopulmonary (Foregut) Anomalies	236
Pulmonary Agenesis, Aplasia, and Hypoplasia	236
Bronchopulmonary Sequestration	238
Congenital Bronchial Cysts	239
Congenital Cystic Bronchiectasis	242

Congenital Cystic Adenomatoid Malformation.....	242
Congenital Bronchial Atresia	242
Congenital (Neonatal) Lobar Emphysema	243
Anomalies of the Pulmonary Vasculature	244
Hypogenetic Lung Syndrome	244
Anomalous Pulmonary Venous Drainage	245
Absence (Proximal Interruption) of the Right or Left Pulmonary Artery.....	245
Pulmonary Artery Stenosis or Coarctation	245
Anomalous Origin of the Left Pulmonary Artery from the Right	246
Congenital Aneurysms of the Pulmonary Arteries.....	247
Pulmonary Arteriovenous Fistula	247
Varicosities of the Pulmonary Veins.....	249
Anomalies of the Heart and Great Vessels Resulting in Increased or Decreased Pulmonary Blood Flow	249
Systemic Arterial Supply to the Lung	251
Pulmonary Lymphangiectasia	251
Congenital Deficiency of the Left Side of the Parietal Pericardium	252
References	252

6

INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF THE LUNGS.....	254
Host Defense Mechanisms in Bronchopulmonary Infections	254
Local Defense Mechanisms	254
Immunologic Defense Mechanisms	255
Inflammation and Phagocytosis.....	256
The Compromised Host	260
Opportunistic Infections	262
Host-Etiology Relations in the Compromised Host	263
Pneumonia	264
Pneumonia Caused by Gram-Positive Aerobic Bacteria.....	267
Streptococcus Pneumoniae	267
Staphylococcus Aureus	269
Streptococcus Pyogenes	272
Bacillus Anthracis	272
Listeria Monocytogenes	273
Pneumonia Caused by Gram-Negative Aerobic Bacteria.....	274
Pseudomonadaceae	274
Pseudomonas Aeruginosa	274
Pseudomonas Pseudomallei	276
Malleomyces Mallei.....	276
Enterobacteriaceae	276
Klebsiella, Enterobacter, and Serratia Genera	276
Escherichia Coli	279
Bacillus Proteus.....	279
Salmonella Species.....	279
Acinetobacter	280
Small Aerobic Gram-Negative Bacilli	280
Legionella Pneumophila and Related Microorganisms	280
Haemophilus Influenzae	283
Bordetella (Haemophilus) Pertussis	283
Francisella Tularensis.....	283
Yersinia Pestis	284
Pasteurella Multocida.....	285
Brucella Species	285

Other Pneumonias Caused by Aerobic Bacteria.....	286
<i>Neisseria Meningitidis</i>	286
Leptospirosis.....	286
Pneumonia Caused by Anaerobic Organisms.....	286
Mycobacterial Infections of the Lungs.....	288
<i>Mycobacterium Tuberculosis</i>	288
Primary Pulmonary Tuberculosis.....	290
Postprimary Tuberculosis.....	292
Nontuberculous <i>Mycobacteria</i>	300
Mycotic Infections of the Lung.....	302
Histoplasmosis.....	302
Coccidioidomycosis.....	307
North American Blastomycosis.....	310
South American Blastomycosis (Paracoccidioidomycosis).....	312
Cryptococcosis.....	312
Candidiasis (Moniliasis).....	314
<i>Torulopsis Glabrata</i>	315
Actinomycosis.....	315
Nocardiosis.....	316
Aspergillosis.....	317
Mucormycosis.....	319
Geotrichosis.....	320
Sporotrichosis.....	321
Allescheriasis and Monosporosis.....	321
Lung Infections Caused by Viruses, <i>Mycoplasma Pneumoniae</i> , and <i>Rickettsiae</i>	321
Respiratory Syndromes.....	322
Coryza.....	322
Acute Pharyngitis-Tonsillitis Infections.....	322
Acute Respiratory Disease (ARD).....	322
Acute Lower Respiratory Tract Disease.....	323
Respiratory Infections Caused by Viruses.....	328
Myxovirus Respiratory Infections.....	328
Picornavirus Respiratory Infection.....	332
Reovirus Respiratory Infection.....	333
Adenovirus Respiratory Infection.....	333
Herpesvirus Respiratory Infection.....	334
Chlamydia (<i>Bedsonia</i>) Respiratory Infections.....	337
Respiratory Infections Caused by <i>Rickettsiae</i>	338
Parasitic Infestation of the Lung.....	339
Protozoan Infestation.....	339
Amebiasis.....	339
Toxoplasmosis.....	340
<i>Pneumocystis Carinii</i> Infestation.....	341
Metazoan Infestation.....	343
Nemathelminth (Roundworm) Infestation.....	343
Platyhelminth (Flatworm) Infestation.....	345
Arthropod Infestation.....	350
References.....	350

7

DISEASES OF ALTERED IMMUNOLOGIC ACTIVITY.....	358
Immunologic Diseases of the Thorax.....	358
General Characteristics of Immune Reactions.....	358
Goodpasture's Syndrome and Idiopathic Pulmonary Hemorrhage.....	360
Collagen-Vascular Diseases of the Lung.....	363
Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.....	364

Rheumatoid Disease of the Lungs and Pleura	368
Diffuse Systemic Sclerosis (Scleroderma)	372
Dermatomyositis and Polymyositis	375
Sjögren's Syndrome	376
Eosinophilic Lung Disease	379
Idiopathic Eosinophilic Lung Disease	379
Loeffler's Syndrome	379
Chronic Eosinophilic Pneumonia	380
Hypereosinophilic Syndrome	381
Eosinophilic Lung Disease of Specific Etiology	381
Drug-Induced Eosinophilic Lung Disease	381
Parasite-Induced Eosinophilic Lung Disease	381
Fungus-Induced Eosinophilic Lung Disease	382
Eosinophilic Lung Disease Associated with Angiitis or Granulomatosis	382
Wegener's Granulomatosis	382
Allergic Granulomatosis	385
Polyarteritis Nodosa	385
Necrotizing "Sarcoidal" Angiitis and Granulomatosis	386
Bronchopulmonary Hypersensitivity to Organic Dusts	386
Tracheobronchial Hypersensitivity	386
Alveolar Hypersensitivity	389
Notes on Specific Diseases	392
Immunologic Deficiency Syndromes	394
Diseases Primarily of Humoral Deficiency	394
The Agammaglobulinemias	394
The Dysgammaglobulinemias	395
Cell-Mediated Deficiencies	395
Combined Immunodeficiencies	395
References	396

8

NEOPLASTIC DISEASES OF THE LUNGS	400
Benign Neoplasms	400
Bronchial Adenoma	400
Pulmonary Hamartoma	402
Papilloma	403
Leiomyoma and Multiple Pulmonary Fibroleiomyomas	403
Other Mesenchymal and Related Neoplasms	404
Malignant Neoplasms	405
Bronchogenic Carcinoma	405
The Solitary Pulmonary Nodule	419
Bronchiolar (Alveolar Cell) Carcinoma	423
Prognosis in Cases of Bronchogenic Carcinoma	425
Hodgkin's Disease	430
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphomas	436
Immunoblastic Lymphadenopathy	439
Leukemia	440
The Plasma Cell Dyscrasias	441
Metastatic Neoplasms	443
References	448

9

EMBOLIC AND THROMBOTIC DISEASES OF THE LUNGS	454
Pulmonary Thromboembolism	454
Pulmonary Angiography	462

Pulmonary Embolic Disease of Varied Etiology	468
Septic Embolism	468
Fat Embolism	469
Amniotic Fluid Embolism	471
Embolic Manifestations of Parasitic Infestation	473
Embolic Manifestations of Metastatic Cancer	473
Air Embolism	473
Embolism in Drug Addicts	475
Iodized Oil Embolism	477
Metallic Mercury Embolism	477
References	478

10

PULMONARY HYPERTENSION AND EDEMA	482
General Considerations of Pulmonary Blood Flow and Pressure	482
Pulmonary Hypertension	482
Precapillary Pulmonary Hypertension	484
Postcapillary Pulmonary Hypertension	488
Combined Precapillary and Postcapillary Hypertension	491
Chronic Cor Pulmonale	491
Pulmonary Edema	492
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Elevated Microvascular Pressure	497
Cardiogenic Pulmonary Edema	497
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Renal Disease, Hypervolemia, or Hypoproteinemia	503
Pulmonary Edema Secondary to Affection of the Pulmonary Veins	503
Neurogenic and Postictal Pulmonary Edema	504
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Normal Microvascular Pressure	504
Inhalation (Aspiration) of Noxious Fluids	504
Pulmonary Edema Occurring at High Altitude	508
Rapid Re-expansion of Lung in Thoracentesis	509
Other Causes of Permeability Pulmonary Edema	509
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Combined Elevation of Microvascular Pressure and Increased Capillary Permeability	510
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Narcotic Abuse	511
Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS)	512
Pulmonary Edema Associated with Normal Heart Size	517
References	517

11

DISEASES OF THE AIRWAYS	521
Obstructive Airway Disease	521
Obstructive Disease of the Upper Airways	521
Acute Upper Airway Obstruction	521
Chronic Upper Airway Obstruction	523
Obstructive Disease of the Lower Airways	529
Asthma	529
Incidence	530
Etiology	530
Pathogenesis	532
Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema	536
Chronic Bronchitis	537
Pulmonary Emphysema	540
Pathologic Characteristics	540

Incidence.....	542
Etiology and Pathogenesis.....	543
Roentgenographic Manifestations	544
Clinical and Physiologic Manifestations of Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema	549
Bullous Disease of the Lungs	553
Pathologic Characteristics	553
Roentgenographic Manifestations	554
Clinical Manifestations.....	555
Local Emphysema	556
Unilateral or Lobar Emphysema (Swyer-James' or MacLeod's Syndrome).....	556
Bronchiectasis.....	558
Pathogenesis	558
Pathologic Characteristics	558
Roentgenographic Manifestations	559
Clinical Manifestations.....	559
Kartagener's Syndrome	561
Chronic Obstructive Disease of Small Airways	561
Cystic Fibrosis	562
Pathogenesis	563
Pathologic Characteristics	564
Roentgenographic Manifestations	564
Clinical and Biochemical Findings	565
Familial Dysautonomia (Riley-Day Syndrome)	566
References	566

12

THE PNEUMOCONIOSES AND CHEMICALLY-INDUCED LUNG DISEASES

Inhalation Diseases Caused by Inorganic Dust (Inorganic Dust Pneumoconioses)	573
Factors Influencing Lung Reaction.....	573
International Classification of Radiographs of the Pneumoconioses and Recommended Terminology	575
Silicosis.....	578
Silicate Pneumoconioses	583
Asbestosis	583
Talcosis	590
Other Silicatosis	590
Coal-Worker's Pneumoconiosis.....	590
Mixed Dust Pneumoconioses.....	593
Pneumoconiosis Caused by Radiopaque Dust	593
Berylliosis (Beryllium Pneumoconiosis)	594
Chronic Berylliosis.....	595
Aluminum Pneumoconiosis (Aluminosis).....	596
Inhalation Diseases Caused by Noxious Gases and Soluble Aerosols	596
Pulmonary Disease Resulting from Oxygen Therapy.....	597
Pulmonary Disease Resulting from Ozone Inhalation	598
Pulmonary Disease Resulting from Nitrogen Dioxide Inhalation	598
Pulmonary Disease Resulting from Sulfur Dioxide Inhalation	599
Pulmonary Disease Resulting from Inhalation of a Variety of Toxic Substances.....	599
Bronchopulmonary Disease Associated with Burns.....	600
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	600
Thesaurosis.....	601

Cadmium Poisoning	601
Fluorocarbon and Hydrocarbon Poisoning	601
Epoxide Poisoning	602
Paraquat Poisoning	602
Inhalation Diseases Unrelated to Dusts or Fumes	603
Aspiration of Solid Foreign Bodies	603
Aspiration Pneumonia	604
Drug-Induced Pulmonary Disease	607
References	611

13

**DISEASES OF THE THORAX CAUSED BY EXTERNAL
PHYSICAL AGENTS**

Effects on the Lungs of Nonpenetrating Trauma	616
Effects on the Pleura of Nonpenetrating Trauma	620
Effects on the Mediastinum of Nonpenetrating Trauma	621
Effects on the Diaphragm of Nonpenetrating Trauma	624
Effects on the Chest Wall of Nonpenetrating Trauma	625
Pulmonary Effects of Nonthoracic Trauma	625
Effects on the Thorax of Penetrating Trauma	626
The Postoperative Chest	626
Thoracic Complications of Nonthoracic Surgery	630
Complications of Intubation and Monitoring Apparatus	631
Radiation Injuries of the Lung	634
References	637

14

DISEASES OF THE CHEST OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Sarcoidosis	640
Incidence and Epidemiology	640
Etiology and Pathogenesis	641
Pathologic Characteristics	642
Roentgenographic Manifestations	643
Clinical Manifestations	647
Diagnosis and Differential Diagnosis	649
Clinical Course and Prognosis	651
Diffuse Fibrosing Alveolitis, Chronic Interstitial Pneumonia, Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, and the End-Stage Lung	651
Etiology	653
Chronic Interstitial Pneumonia	653
Diffuse Pulmonary Fibrosis and the End-Stage Lung	658
Neurofibromatosis and Diffuse Pulmonary Disease	659
Ankylosing Spondylitis and Upper Lobe Pulmonary Fibrosis	660
Lymphangiomyomatosis and Tuberous Sclerosis	660
Pulmonary Disease Characterized by Excess Accumulation of Lipids	662
Cholesterol Pneumonitis	662
Pulmonary Alveolar Proteinosis	663
Histiocytosis-X	665
Gaucher's Disease	667
Pulmonary Alveolar Microlithiasis	667
References	669

15

DISEASES OF THE PLEURA	674
Pleural Effusion	674
Clinical Manifestations	674
Pleural Effusion Caused by Infection	675
Bacteria	675
Fungi	677
Viruses and Mycoplasma	677
Parasites	677
Pleural Effusion Caused by Immunologic Disease	678
Pleural Effusion Caused by Asbestos	679
Pleural Effusion Caused by Neoplasms	679
Pleural Effusion Caused by Thromboembolic Disease	681
Pleural Effusion Caused by Cardiac Decompensation	681
Pleural Effusion Caused by Trauma	682
Pleural Effusion Caused by Disease Arising Outside the Thorax	683
Chylothorax	684
Pneumothorax	684
Pleural Thickening	686
Local Pleural Thickening	686
Local Pleural Masses	687
General Pleural Thickening	687
Diffuse Pleural Mesothelioma	689
References	691

16

DISEASES OF THE MEDIASTINUM	694
Mediastinitis	694
Acute Mediastinitis	694
Chronic Mediastinitis	695
Pneumomediastinum	698
Mediastinal Hemorrhage	700
Mediastinal Masses	700
Mediastinal Masses Situated Predominantly in the Anterior Compartment	700
Thymoma	700
Germinal Cell Neoplasms	702
Thyroid Masses	704
Parathyroid Masses	704
Mesenchymal Neoplasms	704
Mediastinal Masses Situated Predominantly in the Middle Compartment ..	705
Lymph Node Enlargement	705
Primary Tracheal Neoplasms	706
Bronchogenic Cyst	706
Masses Situated in the Anterior Cardiophrenic Angle	706
Dilatation of the Main Pulmonary Artery	707
Dilatation of the Major Mediastinal Veins	708
Dilatation of the Aorta or Its Branches	710
Mediastinal Masses Situated Predominantly in the Posterior Compartment	712
Neurogenic Neoplasms	713
Meningocele (Meningomyelocele)	714
Neurenteric Cyst	714

Gastroenteric Cyst	714
Primary Lesions of the Esophagus	714
Diseases of the Thoracic Spine	716
Extramedullary Hematopoiesis	717
References	717

17

DISEASES OF THE DIAPHRAGM AND CHEST WALL	720
The Diaphragm	720
Abnormalities of Diaphragmatic Position or Motion	720
Diaphragmatic Hernias	721
Subphrenic Abscess	724
The Chest Wall	724
Abnormalities of the Ribs	724
Abnormalities of the Sternum	726
Abnormalities of the Thoracic Spine	727
Neoplasms of the Chest Wall	729
References	731

18

RESPIRATORY DISEASE ASSOCIATED WITH A NORMAL CHEST ROENTGENOGRAM	732
Diseases of the Lung Parenchyma	732
Local Diseases	732
General Diseases	732
Diseases of the Pleura	733
Diseases of the Airways	733
Alveolar Hypoventilation	733
Disturbances of Ventilatory Control	735
Disturbances of the Respiratory Pump	737
Clinical Manifestations	742
Venoarterial Shunts	743
Extrapulmonary Venoarterial Shunts	743
Pulmonary Venoarterial Shunts	744
Methemoglobinemia and Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	744
Alveolar Hyperventilation	745
References	746

19

TABLES OF DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS AND DECISION TREES	748
General Comments	748
Table 19-1 Cystic and Cavitory Disease	750
Decision Tree 19-1A Cystic and Cavitory Disease (Usually Solitary)	759
Decision Tree 19-1B Cystic and Cavitory Disease (Usually Multiple)	760
Table 19-2 Solitary Pulmonary Nodules Less than 6 cm in Diameter	761
Decision Tree 19-2 Solitary Pulmonary Nodules Less than 6 cm in Diameter	771
Table 19-3 Solitary Pulmonary Masses 6 cm or More in Diameter	772
Decision Tree 19-3 Solitary Pulmonary Masses 6 cm or more in Diameter (with or without Cavitation)	777

Table 19-4 Multiple Pulmonary Nodules with or without Cavitation.....	778
Decision Tree 19-4 Multiple Pulmonary Nodules.....	783
Table 19-5 Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Predominantly Acinar Pattern.....	784
Decision Tree 19-5A Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Predominantly Acinar Pattern.....	789
Decision Tree 19-5B Acute Pulmonary Edema with a Normal Heart Size.....	790
Table 19-6 Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Predominantly Nodular, Reticular, or Reticulonodular Pattern.....	791
Decision Tree 19-6A Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Predominant Nodular or Reticulonodular Pattern (Acute).....	807
Decision Tree 19-6B Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Predominant Nodular or Reticulonodular Pattern (Chronic).....	808
Table 19-7 Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with a Mixed Acinar and Reticulonodular Pattern.....	809
Decision Tree 19-7 Diffuse Pulmonary Disease with an Acinar and Reticulonodular Pattern.....	815
Table 19-8 Pleural Effusion as the Sole Roentgenographic Abnormality in the Thorax.....	816
Decision Tree 19-8 Pleural Effusion Unassociated with Other Roentgenographic Evidence of Disease in the Thorax.....	823
Table 19-9 Hilar and Mediastinal Lymph-Node Enlargement.....	824
Decision Tree 19-9A Hilar and Mediastinal Lymph-Node Enlargement, Unassociated with Other Roentgenographic Evidence of Disease.....	831
Decision Tree 19-9B Hilar and Mediastinal Lymph-Node Enlargement Associated with Other Roentgenographic Evidence of Disease.....	832
GLOSSARY OF WORDS AND TERMS IN CHEST ROENTGENOLOGY...	833
INDEX.....	849