

MANUAL
OF MEDICAL
EMERGENCIES

S. C. CULLEN & E. G. GROSS

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of MEDICAL
EMERGENCIES

by

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Third Edition

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Preface to Third Edition

THE AUTHORS wish to emphasize that the objective of this manual is to make available to the physician a handy reference that will facilitate meeting acute emergencies. We feel that unnecessary deaths occur because the physician is not aware of the necessity for, or the methods by which, acute interference with such fundamental processes as respiration and circulation can be eliminated. The manual is not designed to provide complete information of a diagnostic or therapeutic nature; it is designed primarily to help the physician save the patient's life in those first few critical minutes.

In this revision, the major changes have been made in the extension of the material on acute poisoning to meet the problems evoked by the introduction of new toxic drugs. The list of common drugs and poisons has been extended to facilitate identification. Some changes have been made in the problems of acute circulatory emergencies.

We are again indebted to all those who have made suggestions and provided helpful criticism.

Preface to First Edition

FREQUENTLY the physician is precipitated into an emergency situation in which he is compelled to institute immediate therapeutic as well as diagnostic measures and for which he may be unprepared. This is particularly true of the general practitioner, whose ubiquitous practice of medicine demands an all-encompassing and practical working knowledge of internal medicine, surgery, pharmacology, toxicology and the like.

The urgency of the situation does not permit reflection, leisurely search of the literature or consultation for assistance in solving the problem at hand. It seemed, therefore, that a small manual in which concise, readily accessible and reasonably complete coverage of emergency situations, with particular respect to immediate detailed therapeutic measures, would be useful to the busy practitioner.

Furthermore, the physician is concerned almost daily with problems in patient management, for the solution of which he is dependent on knowledge of practical details which are neglected or omitted from

most medical curricula. As a consequence, this manual deals with such problems as the sedation of the agitated patient, the administration of oxygen therapy, the care of the comatose patient and technics of venipuncture.

It is emphasized that this manual is designed to cover only the acute emergency; extensive diagnostic measures and continued definitive therapeutic measures are deliberately excluded. The material is presented in the belief that many patients' lives can be saved with appropriate emergency therapeutic drugs and procedures efficiently applied until complete diagnosis is possible and specific therapy is determined. It can be expected that some of the ancient and revered emergency drugs and procedures will be either totally neglected or treated critically. On the other hand, pharmacologic and physiologic justification is established for many of the older remedies. We have attempted throughout to confine recommended drugs, equipment and procedures to those that are easily available, transportable and workable.

We are indebted to Dr. H. Russell Meyers for the introductory discussion of general principles of management and for Chapter 6 on Head Injuries; to Dr. L. E. January for his assistance with the chapters on care of comatose patients and circulatory emergencies; to Dr. Rubin Flocks for the material on care of the bladder in comatose patients; to Dr. Sidney Ziffren for the material on immediate treatment of patients with burns, and to many other colleagues in and out of the College of Medicine of the State University of

Iowa who have given valuable advice. Acknowledgment is due the authors and publisher for permission to reproduce Figure 22 from W. E. Nelson's *Textbook of Pediatrics* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1946) and Figures 25-27 and Figure 29 from John S. Lundy's *Clinical Anesthesia* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1942). In addition we are indebted to Miss Dorothy Skubal and Mrs. Olive Bailey, efficient and hard-working secretaries, to Mr. Frederick Kent for his excellent photography and to the staff of the Year Book Publishers for unstinted help.