

# Human Physiology

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Edited by

Robert F. Schmidt and Gerhard Thews



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Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg New York

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R. F. Schmidt and G. Thews

Translated by Marguerite A. Biederman-Thorson

With 569 Figures, Most in Color

Springer-Verlag  
Berlin Heidelberg New York 1983

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Translation of "Physiologie des Menschen", 20. Auflage, 1980  
ISBN 3-540-09446-6 Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg New York  
ISBN 0-387-09446-6 Springer-Verlag New York Heidelberg Berlin

ISBN 3-540-11669-9 Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg New York  
ISBN 0-387-11669-9 Springer-Verlag New York Heidelberg Berlin

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Physiologie des Menschen. English. Human physiology. Bibliography: p. Includes index. 1. Human physiology.  
I. Schmidt, Robert F. II. Thews, Gerhard, 1926-. III. Title. [DNLM: 1. Physiology. QT 104 P55]  
QP 34.5.P48513 1983 612 82-7333  
ISBN 0-387-11669-9 (U.S.) AACR2

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Printed in Germany

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Typesetting and binding: G. Appl, Wemding, printing: aprinta, Wemding

2124/3140-543210

## Preface

*Human Physiology* is the English version of a time-honored German textbook first published by HERMANN REIN in 1936. We undertook the preparation of a completely revised 20th edition with the intention of making the book accessible to a wide range of English-speaking readers. The subject-matter was therefore organized so as to correspond to the structuring of physiology courses in most countries of the world.

The book is directed primarily at students of medicine. Its aim is to enable them to understand living processes in the human organism, providing the basis for the scientific understanding of pathological changes. The material was chosen to give the reader not only the knowledge required for passing examinations, but also information necessary for a subsequent professional career. For this reason special attention was devoted to pathophysiological aspects.

We hope that the book will prove a useful reference on the present status of physiology for physicians in private and hospital practice as well as for its primary readership. The book should also serve biologists, biochemists, pharmacologists, pharmacists, and psychologist as a source of information on the physiological principles underlying their disciplines.

In order to facilitate quick reference, we have striven for clear organization, lucid presentation, the accentuation of key ideas, and instructive illustrations. For the sake of compactness we have dispensed with historical introductions, accounts of unproven hypotheses, and descriptions of specialized measuring techniques. The references provided at the end of each chapter are of two sorts: textbooks and handbooks providing interested readers with guidelines for further study, and selected original papers describing recent or little-known findings.

We would like to express our gratitude here to all those who assisted in the preparation and production of this textbook. Most of all we want to thank our coauthors for their willingness to take the ideas and wishes of the editors into consideration, thereby enhancing the book's clarity and balance. We are especially grateful to the staff of the Gay & Benz studios in Stuttgart for their excellent renderings of the illustrative material. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Marguerite Biederman-Thorson, Oxford, for her outstanding translation. Finally we would like to thank the publisher and his staff for their generous support in the preparation of this book.

August 1982

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