

# Preface

The successful practice of surgery embraces the concept of life-long learning. Indeed, every field of surgical specialization now boasts of comprehensive textbooks which run to thousands of pages. To the newly arrived student of surgery or to the practitioner faced with the occasional surgical problem, the scope of knowledge can seem overwhelming. This book is designed to assist our colleagues endeavoring to learn the core concepts and common problems of surgical practice. We have chosen not to dwell upon the arcane aspects of surgical knowledge or technique that are the purview of the specialist. Rather, this volume is meant to provide much of the knowledge content demanded of the clerkship participant as well as the non-surgical, referring physician.

Several unique features have been utilized for this purpose. First, we have emphasized evidence-based approaches to surgical practice throughout the text. For this purpose, we have liberally (and literally) adapted evidence-based tables from the first edition of the comprehensive textbook *Surgery: Basic Science and Clinical Evidence* which I was privileged to be a coeditor with my colleagues: Drs. Jeff Norton, Randy Bollinger, Fred Chang, Sean Mulvihill, Harvey Pass, and Rob Thompson. Second, we have adapted many of the learning objectives defined by the Association for Surgical Education and outlined these at the beginning of each chapter. Many chapters are presentation focused rather than bearing the more traditional disease or organ system orientation. Each chapter is introduced by one or more brief case studies that focus upon key concepts and common presentations of the illnesses under discussion. Finally, diagnosis and management algorithms are included in most chapters to guide both the learning and doing processes.

I express my gratitude for the efforts of my colleagues in the Department of Surgery at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School who have contributed unselfishly of their knowledge in the construct of this edition. I know them personally to be master clinicians and educators in their field. There is much wisdom embedded in their contributions. I hope the reader can share in this wisdom as well as their commitment to *learning surgery*.

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