

Preface

After more than a quarter century as a primary care educator, I am convinced that our graduates enter practice inadequately trained in the diagnosis and management of musculoskeletal problems and injuries. One reason for this perceived deficiency is the relatively short duration of primary care training—typically three years for family medicine, general internal medicine, and general pediatrics. During this time, there are just not enough months to teach all a clinician needs to know about diseases and trauma involving the musculoskeletal system. This inadequacy is compounded by the sometimes quirky nature of the problems: that is, for example, the increased risk of nonunion in a fracture of the carpal navicular (scaphoid) bone or the maneuver that can magically reduce a child's radial head subluxation.

The chapters in this book are from the edited reference book *Family Medicine: Principles and Practice*, 6th edition, which is widely used by family physicians in the United States and abroad. The publisher and I believe that, in addition to family physicians, the chapters in this book will also be useful to other clinicians providing broad-based care: general internists, general pediatricians, emergency physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. When compared to the large, comprehensive book, this volume will be preferred by some readers because of the physically smaller size and perhaps by the lower cost.

In selecting chapters to include in the book, I have included problems involving all areas of the skeleton and related musculature, in both children and adults. Athletic injuries are included because, after all, primary care clinicians manage most sports injuries. I have included a chapter on acute lacerations, which often accompany other types of injuries. In addition to sprains, strains, and fractures, there are chapters covering illnesses affecting the musculoskeletal system:

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various types of arthritis, fibromyalgia, and the complex regional pain syndrome.

I hope you find this book useful in daily practice; comments are welcome.

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A Handbook

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