

Preface

Anorectal pathology is common in the general population. Understanding the pathophysiology, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases of the anus and rectum is often quite a challenge for physicians and other healthcare providers. There are many barriers to achievement of high quality care for these conditions. Patients may be embarrassed to admit to anorectal symptoms. Specific education about diseases of the anus and rectum may be limited among primary treating physicians depending on the institution where training takes place. Of most importance from the author's standpoint, a short book that connects together anorectal anatomy and pathophysiology with medical and surgical treatment of anorectal disease is needed by many in the medical field.

In creating *Anal and Rectal Diseases: A Concise Manual*, my surgical coeditors and I have worked diligently to fulfill the aforementioned unmet need. The style of the book was developed to communicate the most important information on each topic in brief, therefore making the book useful for reference and review. Studying a specific chapter will give the reader an accurate overall picture of each subject. We have also included many figures to aid the reader in their understanding of the presented material. By adding detailed information about surgeries performed for these conditions, it is our hope that practitioners who are not surgeons will develop a deeper understanding of these procedures, their indications, their benefits to the patient as well as their potential complications.

Throughout the book, we have included "clinical pearls," generally summarizing important aspects of the preceding short chapter. These small pieces of insight are selected by choice of the individual section authors. They may represent the author's opinion based on experience rather than pure evidence from technical literature about the topic. We believe that despite tremendous advances in the scientific application of medical knowledge, clinical experience, reflected in the practitioner's art, remains a vital dynamic in the complete care of a patient.

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