

Preface

There are over 62 million women of childbearing age in the United States, 85 % of whom will have given birth by age 33. At least one-third of these women are entering pregnancy with a chronic medical illness, and 50 % are overweight or obese. Most women will not have received any preventive or medical services in the year prior to conception. This translates into women entering pregnancy without preconception counseling about nutrition, high-risk behaviors, or safety of medications and often with chronic disease in suboptimal control. Looking at diabetes alone, there are 1.85 million women of reproductive age with diabetes and an even greater number with prediabetes. Preconception management of these women could potentially mitigate risk for 113,000 births. There are 1 million women on antiepileptic drugs, impacting 75,000 pregnancies, and 7 million women who describe themselves as frequent drinkers, affecting 577,000 births annually.

Medical Management of the Pregnant Patient is meant to draw attention to the many women of childbearing age before, during, and after pregnancy who have concomitant medical illness. The authors are all experts in the field of obstetric medicine, internists with special expertise and training in medical problems in pregnancy. All work collaboratively with obstetricians and maternal-fetal medicine physicians, understanding that care of this very vulnerable and rewarding population is best done with a highly motivated team. The rewards are enormous for all of us who have worked in this field.

Medical Management of the Pregnant Patient is a practical guide to the management of the most frequently encountered medical illnesses during pregnancy. We hope that it brings you, the providers asked to participate in the care of sick pregnant women, some measure of guidance and comfort. This book is dedicated to my mentors in the field, Drs. Peter Garner and Richard V. Lee, and to all of the patients who have entrusted their care to me over many years.

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