
**PRINCIPLES OF DIABETES
MELLITUS**

PRINCIPLES OF DIABETES MELLITUS

edited by

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Preface

Diabetes mellitus is a very common disease. Described initially in the Egyptian papyrus *Ebers* in 1500 BC and now affecting approximately 150,000,000 people worldwide, with its prevalence rising rapidly, diabetes continues to mystify and fascinate both practitioners and investigators by its elusive causes and multitude of manifestations.

A neurosurgeon operating on a patient with a life-threatening brain tumor, an obstetrician delivering a baby, a psychiatrist trying to penetrate deep into a patient's emotional life – all will encounter diabetes from their very early days of medical practice. This disease will significantly affect the choice of therapeutic approaches throughout their careers, regardless of their specialty. Hence, there is need for every student of medicine, whatever his or her ultimate career goals, to understand and learn to manage diabetes.

Many excellent diabetes textbooks exist. Most of them, however, are written for endocrinologists. This textbook is written not only for endocrinologists, but also for other specialists, primary care physicians, housestaff, and particularly for medical students.

The needs of the latter group are well understood by the authors of this text, most of whom have been medical students and all of whom continue to teach medical students on a regular basis. The main challenge for a medical student is to “digest” a large amount of complicated, rapidly changing information under heavy time pressure. Therefore, a book written for medical students must not only be up-to-date and cover all aspects of the disease, from its pathogenesis on the molecular and cellular levels to its most modern therapy, but must also be concise, clear, and easy to use. To achieve these goals, we have made liberal use of illustrations and tables, provided a summary after each chapter, and added website addresses where additional information can be found to the lists of references. Each chapter is written to stand on its own, and readers who wish to explore a particular subject should not have to search through many chapters. This may have resulted in redundancies noticeable to readers of the entire text, but the pages where the most detailed discussion of a given topic can be found are highlighted in the index in bold print.

We hope that these features will make **Principles of Diabetes Mellitus** user-friendly. We also hope that readers will find this volume useful for studies of diabetes throughout their professional lives: first in medical school, then during the years of residency, and, finally, as they enter their chosen specialty.

The authors would like to dedicate this book to those from whom we learned and continue to learn about diabetes: our teachers, who inspired us to undertake studies of the challenging diabetes problems and then supported us throughout these studies; our students, who lead us to ponder new questions; and finally, our patients, who live with the disease every moment of every day and in some ways know more about it than we do.

We thank Jill Gregory for her expert help with illustrations and Anthony J. DiCarlo for help with computer programming. We also gratefully acknowledge the efforts of Marilyn Small Jefferson, who helped coordinate the work of sixty nine writers, and without whose patience, diligence, and dedication this book would not have been possible.

The authors.