DISEASE DATA BOOK

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PREFACE

Here we offer a new approach to understanding and managing common medical conditions. With the needs of our readers in mind we present clearer, more extensive and more expansive views on them.

Traditional medical textbooks are wordy tomes with well worn patterns dealing in set order with 'causes, symptoms and signs, diagnosis and treatment'. They offer formal instant snapshots of diseases.

We have devised an economic synoptic style, and we have endeavoured to give a comprehensive and an on-going long term move picture of each condition and to relate this to the analysis of symptoms and signs, to diagnostic assessment and to management and treatment.

We have selected 22 important conditions and for each have followed the same sequence of questions and answers:

- *What is it?*
giving a brief summary of the current understanding of the nature of the condition.
- *Who gets it when?*
showing the age-sex distributions and influence of other factors such as social class, international comparisons, and their likely frequency in general practice and at the district general hospital.
- *What happens?*
analysing the significance of symptoms and signs, the likely course and outcome and how these influence care.
- *What to do?*
an appreciation of the nature and presentation of the condition, and their relevance to diagnosis and management.

Our style and thinking have developed from experience with our previous books: *Common Diseases* (Fry, J., MTP, 1985), *Common Medical Problems* (Sandler, G., MTP, 1984) and *NHS Data Book* (Fry, J., Brooks, D., and McColl, I., MTP, 1984). As general practitioners and as a consultant physician in a district general hospital, we are aware of the real importance of being able to obtain a clear appreciation of our common problems in as easy and as quick a way as possible. Hence our rapid-read method, style and approach. We have enjoyed the challenge of putting the material together and we have all learnt much from each other. We hope that our readers too will enjoy and learn from our efforts.

To whom do we dedicate our book? We believe that all medical students, postgraduate trainees and clinicians will find it of value, as will our colleagues in associated para-medical professions.

*John Fry
Gerald Sandler
David Brooks*

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