

*The Treatment of*  
*Obesity*

To my wife  
who most appreciates how much weight I lost in editing this book

CURRENT STATUS OF MODERN THERAPY: VOLUME 2

*The Treatment of  
Obesity*

*Edited by  
J. F. Munro*

  
**MTP PRESS LIMITED**  
*International Medical Publishers*

Published by  
MTP Press Limited  
Falcon House  
Lancaster, England

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1979  
First published 1979

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**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

The treatment of obesity. – (Current status of modern therapy; vol. 2).

1. Obesity

I. Munro, John Forbes II. Series

616.3'98'06 RC628

ISBN 978-94-015-1134-6

ISBN 978-94-015-1132-2 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-94-015-1132-2

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## *Consultant Editor's Note*

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### CURRENT STATUS OF MODERN THERAPY

The *Current Status of Modern Therapy* is a major series from MTP Press with the purpose of providing a definitive view of modern therapeutic practice in those areas of clinical medicine in which important changes are occurring. The series consists of monographs specially commissioned under the individual editorship of internationally recognized experts in their fields. Their selection of a panel of contributors from many countries ensures an international perspective on developments in therapy.

The series aims to review the growth areas of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in a systematic way. It is a continuing series in which the same subject areas will be covered by revised editions as advances make this desirable.

Obesity is a fitting subject for the series for, although it is viewed in a different light within different cultures and in different ages, within our affluent society obesity is recognized as one cause of increased mortality. Hence for both cosmetic and medical reasons the treatment of obesity is accepted as important.

This latest volume in the Current Status of Modern Therapy Series – *The Treatment of Obesity* – shows that there is no single successful method of therapy for all patients, but it provides an excellent review of the latest ideas on this subject.

J. MARKS  
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Cambridge*

*Series Editor*

## *Preface*

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During the last few years, there has been growing medical interest in the problem of obesity. Although this may not have resulted in a dramatic breakthrough in our understanding of the condition, at least we are now more aware of our ignorance. Possibly this partly explains the increasing medical concern for, and sympathy in, the management of the obese. In the introductory chapter, John Garrow says that he believes it would be better to treat a few people well than many subjects unsuccessfully. This theme is developed in those chapters which deal with specific forms of therapy including exercise, protein-sparing fasting and bypass surgery, while the chapters on pharmacological agents review our knowledge, and our ignorance, of the mode of action and efficacy of the currently available drugs.

Almost in contrast, the chapter on behavioural therapy and group therapy suggests that obesity is a problem which could best be tackled on a community basis. Clearly such an approach is very attractive, and the combination of behavioural therapy and slimming organizations would appear to offer the best prospects of controlling most subjects' weight problems. There will always remain, however, the individual patient in whom there will be a place for the various special techniques now available.

It is hoped that this book will contribute to a greater understanding of the various problems faced by the obese, and the regimes that can be offered.

J. F. MUNRO