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### Book Review

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## Book Review

**The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy, 17th Edition;** M. H. Beers, R. Berkow, Editors, The Merck Publishing Group, Rahway, New Jersey, 1999, 2,833 pages.

The Merck Manual was first published in 1899. This concise volume, which was called Merck's Manual, A Ready Reference Pocket Book for the Practicing Physician, cost \$1.00 and contained 192 pages of useful information about names and synonyms, physical form and appearance, solubilities, therapeutic uses, modes of administration, disage, incompatibilities, antidotes, and much more for the drugs in common use by physicians at that time. It was very well received and, over the years since then, it grew to its present size and form.

This centennial edition of the Merck Manual is the product of an arduous enterprise. New topics in this edition include disorders of the hand, prion diseases, death and dying, probabilities in clinical medicine, multiple chemical sensitivity, chronic fatigue syndrome, rehabilitation, smoking cessation, and drug therapy in the elderly, among others.

The editors and the editorial board took on a monumental task and, as usual, they have done the job well. The Merck Manual is highly recommended as required reading and will serve as a ready reference to all whose work takes them into the various disciplines of medical practice and biomedical science.



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