



Preface

Preoperative medical consultation



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Guest Editor

Preoperative medical consultation plays an important role in the practices of both primary care physicians and subspecialists. Despite this fact, many physicians feel inadequately trained to function as consultants in the perioperative period. Prior to 1980, there were essentially no textbooks on the subject, and there were only a few “landmark” papers. The November 1979 issue of the *Medical Clinics of North America* on “Medical Evaluation of the Preoperative Patient” was essentially the first “book” on the subject. Subsequently, numerous articles and textbooks on various aspects of preoperative medical consultation were published. Preoperative medical consultation was covered in the May 1987 issue, select topics in medical consultation in the March 1993 issue, and postoperative medical complications was the topic of the September 2001 issue of the *Medical Clinics of North America*.

The goal of this current issue is to review and update the major topics in preoperative medical consultation. This publication is not intended to be an all-inclusive reference book. It was written by practicing internists with extensive experience in perioperative medicine and expertise in their selected areas. The vast majority of our authors are general internists and members of the Medical Consultation Interest Group of the Society for General Internal Medicine (www.sгим.org). Based on our experience, we have chosen topics we think are the most important or those most commonly encountered in clinical practice. The 15 articles in this issue range from the role of the consultant, preoperative laboratory testing, and perioperative medication management to preoperative risk assessment of patients with diseases

of the major organ systems and risk reduction strategies to minimize potential postoperative complications.

I feel that this information will be useful to all clinicians involved in pre-operative medical consultation.

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