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Foreword  
Atrial fibrillation



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*Consulting Editor*

A colleague once commented to me that atrial fibrillation is the “low back pain” of cardiology. I suppose he meant that it was common, difficult to treat successfully, frequently recurrent, rarely lethal but could cause considerable morbidity, and that approaches to its management were controversial. Dr. David Haines and the experts he has assembled have put together an outstanding issue of the *Cardiology Clinics* that provides a more upbeat and hopeful picture of this nagging entity. Like many topics in medicine, atrial fibrillation is a moving target with considerable research currently underway. We may be on the verge of an interventional solution, and ximelagatran may revolutionize anticoagulation management. How-

ever, I doubt there will be one magic bullet for atrial fibrillation in the near future. Its causes, precipitators, and maintainers are too complex in my view. Thus, the clinician needs to fully understand all the approaches to atrial fibrillation management and how to apply them to individual patients. Fortunately, the contents of this issue should accelerate this process.

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