

Preface



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Guest Editor

Severe sepsis remains a difficult condition to characterize and is often a difficult disease to treat. Morbidity and mortality remains unacceptably high. Although the history of sepsis goes back to the origins of modern medicine, only in the last 40 years is the septic state beginning to be unraveled.

In this issue of *Critical Care Clinics of North America*, the history, characterization, pathophysiology, and treatment of sepsis and severe sepsis are reviewed and updated based on the most recent medical literature. The issue also addresses performance improvement methods and multicenter clinical trial issues (both as to design and for the benefit of participating investigative centers).

This issue is focused on adult patients and is intended for the multiple specialties (critical care, emergency medicine, infectious diseases, surgery, internal medicine, and others) and disciplines (physicians, nurses, clinical pharmacologists, and others). But most importantly it is for the benefit of the septic patient, whose health care providers may learn from this issue and through that learning make a difference in outcome for that patient.

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