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Preface

Perioperative management of the podiatric patient



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Guest Editor

This issue of *Clinics in Podiatric Medicine and Surgery* discusses perioperative issues vital to the enhancement of the management of our patients. Our goal is to deliver service either medically or surgically to maximize our results while minimizing adverse outcomes, thus providing an experience that reassures the patients and gives them comfort in the care that they receive.

All too often, we tend to treat only the condition that we diagnose, forgetting our main purpose, the whole patient. The foot *is* connected to the rest of the body. Why be myopic? When we go to the dentist, does he only look at one tooth? If a patient presents with a unilateral condition, we need to look at both feet to more closely assess the problem, differentially diagnose, and ultimately make treatment recommendations. We would be remiss, setting the patient and ourselves up for failure and less than optimal results, if we do not address the patient as a person, not a *condition!*

Each patient's physical, psychological, social, and employment needs must be assessed. Our understanding of these needs assist us in designing a treatment program that will set a course to promote successful outcomes. Even a successful treatment, i.e. the technical surgical correction of a bunion, can lead to adverse results. The patient could suffer an infection, reaction to medication, develop a blood clot, or just take longer to heal. This, in turn, exceeds their level of expectation in multiple areas. They begin to doubt their general health, confidence in their treatment, and worse yet, their physician. Instead of returning to

work as expected, those expectations ultimately change. Thus begins a cycle of a loss of hope, leading to a sense of anger and frustration. The bond between the patient and the doctor becomes cloudy.

The papers presented in this issue clearly examine those issues related specifically to serve the needs of our patients as people, not conditions. In doing so, they assist us as providers in dispensing a better product. We would like to think that we are the best at what we do. We need to think more globally. It is not just our technical skills. The patient's overall needs are equally, if not more important, in assuring positive results on all levels.

At the end of each paper, there is a list of "Key Points to Remember." This would help summarize what each author feels would be those important concepts that the reader should know. Additionally, the papers were designed to assist the reader in better understanding specific areas of patient care and assessment, thus assisting in optimal outcomes. When appropriate, we have developed specific assessment tools, ie psychological assessments, the ABLE perioperative assessment, and a new example of a visual analog scale, the "Road to Recovery" that can be immediately adapted to any practitioner's practice to assess the patient's progress.

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