This issue of Medical Clinics of North America is the first in the new millennium and is devoted to the secondary prevention of myocardial infarction. Of the many active areas of investigation in cardiovascular medicine, this is certainly one in which the results of recent clinical trials, particularly in relation to the hyperlipidemias, have had a profound impact on daily practice. The perception of the area of prevention has now shifted decisively from a traditional view of a discipline with barely perceptible clinical impact to one where interventions of different types have a decided influence on outcomes in patients with vascular disorders.

In this issue, the new growth in the “traditional areas” of hypercholesterolemia, hypertension, diabetes and smoking cessation is reviewed. Other active areas of investigation and treatment have been highlighted also, such as inflammation and the use of antibiotics, antiplatelet drugs, antioxidants, and female hormones. The use of folic acid and vitamin B₉ is now the subject of major trials in patients with vascular disorders. This is reviewed also. Obesity, now a massive public health problem in the United States and other places in the world, receives special attention, as does gene therapy, which carries the major potential to alter the management of all patients with genetically modifiable risk factors. Three areas of particular relevance to the busy clinician—cost effectiveness, cardiac rehabilitation, and the incorporation of preventive strategies into daily practice—have been reviewed.

This issue should be a useful update and resource for clinicians, nurses, nutritionists, and others involved in the area of prevention of vascular disorders, providing both a state of the art review of current thought and practice as well as a glimpse of what the next few years may offer to this exciting area.

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