Primary care physicians are usually the first to encounter patients with symptoms that may be caused by cardiac arrhythmias. They have the unenviable task of deciding which of these patients require further evaluation by cardiologists or electrophysiologists and which patients can be managed without referral. The referring physician must also be cognizant of investigations that might be contemplated, therapies that might be offered, their effectiveness, and their possible side effects or complications. Furthermore, they must make these decisions in the face of rapid advances in our understanding and treatment of cardiac arrhythmias.

This issue of the Medical Clinics of North America addresses state of the art practices for the evaluation and management of common cardiac arrhythmias. The contributors are established investigators in cardiac electrophysiology, and they were selected specifically to write about their area of expertise. I am indebted to them for their fine and readable contributions.

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