The first of this pair of issues of *The Medical Clinics of North America* on obstructive lung diseases (volume 80, number 3, July 1996) dealt with issues surrounding chronic irreversible airflow obstruction, generally that lung disease caused by cigarette smoking. The second volume, subtitled *Asthma, Sleep, AIDS, and Occupational Exposures*, deals with airways diseases other than chronic airflow limitation. There are four state-of-the-art articles dealing with various aspects of asthma, one on occupational bronchitis and nonasthmatic airflow obstruction, two on sleep-related respiratory problems, and an article about the involvement of the lung with AIDS.

Drs. Abou-Shala and MacIntyre review the emergency management of asthma, including novel approaches to complete and partial ventilatory support in life-threatening refractory asthma and particularly the relatively new concept of permissive hypocapnia. Drs. Cockcroft and Kalra review the ambulatory management of asthma, an area of rapidly changing treatment protocols currently focusing on aggressive early use of anti-inflammatory agents in conjunction principally with patient education and environmental control, with the goal of therapy being to minimize beta_2_-agonist requirements. Support for this approach comes from the outstanding review by Dr. Taylor et al summarizing concerns regarding the regular (scheduled or unscheduled) use of inhaled beta_2_-agonists. The final article on asthma is an update on nonsensitizing (or nonallergic) causes of occupational asthma by Dr. Lemière et al. This condition, frequently referred to as RADS (reactive airway dysfunction syndrome), was felt to be an infrequent finding following a dramatic severe illness caused by a single acute industrial accident. The authors present data strongly suggesting that these old views were oversimplified and that this is a much more common condition than is appreciated.

The next presentation is a state-of-the-art review by Drs. Huang and Stansell on pulmonary involvement in AIDS. This important topical article does not deal specifically with airways diseases; however, it is included because of the important advances in knowledge in this area. Moving to the upper airway, Dr. Man reviews the topic of diagnosis and management of obstructive sleep apnea, a common and prominent condition responsible for much morbidity and mortality. Drs. Jokic and Fitzpatrick cover the broader topic of nocturnal respiratory disorders, focusing on all airways diseases. In the final article, Dr. Garshick et al review the issue of nonasthmatic occupational airways disease including occupational chronic bronchitis, byssinosis, and decrements in lung function generally obstructive in origin.
It has been an enjoyable and educational experience co-editing two issues of The Medical Clinics of North America. We wish to thank our colleagues from around the world who have spent a great deal of time and effort in preparing top-notch, state-of-the-art manuscripts. We also wish to thank Jacqie Bramley and Ruth Day and all of the other "manuscript preparers" who made this work possible. It has indeed been a pleasure working with W. B. Saunders and Heather Cullen. We hope the readers appreciate the efforts of all concerned.

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