Preface

Emergencies in the Outpatient Setting

Ambulatory clinical practice is becoming increasingly challenging with more and more demands placed on clinicians’ time. In addition, because the patient population is aging and is more likely to have multiple comorbidities, the complexity and acuity of outpatients are significantly increasing. In light of the ever-changing landscape of health care delivery, recognition and management of emergent and urgent conditions in outpatient venues are paramount. It is therefore critical that clinicians have the knowledge and skills to diagnose, triage, and manage these situations in an efficient, high-quality, and cost-effective manner.

This issue of Medical Clinics of North America focuses on the most common urgencies/emergencies encountered in the outpatient setting. These topics were chosen by polling seasoned general internists who had experience in both academic and private practice environments. It is not meant to be an exhaustive review of all emergencies encountered in the outpatient setting but rather a compilation of the more common urgencies/emergencies that may present. The authors were tasked with focusing on the recognition of the emergency and its diagnosis, and on the evidence-based treatment of the condition when appropriate on an outpatient basis, and triage to a higher level of care when needed.

It has been my privilege to serve as guest editor for this issue of Medical Clinics of North America. The topics covered in this issue span a wide breadth of medicine, with the unifying theme being the need to rapidly and accurately diagnose and treat the condition to prevent patient suffering and even mortality. It is my hope that the articles contained within this issue will enhance and improve the clinician’s ability to

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manage urgencies/emergencies that present in the outpatient setting and advance their ability to provide efficient, high-quality, cost-effective care.

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