
This book is the first volume of the Wiley series entitled Disease Management in the Elderly, and it is written, according to the series preface, primarily for geriatric medicine students. Given that focus, the content presupposes a certain level of reader knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacodynamics, physiology, and pathophysiology. While the text may be of some value for nurses who are case managers or primary caregivers, it would not be particularly useful for those giving patient care.

An extensive chapter-by-chapter bibliography serves to identify areas of research concerning drug pharmacokinetics, much of which is related to the aging process. The authors are cautious about drawing conclusions or inferences from limited research. However, references from these sources, combined with the writing style, prohibit the even flow of content. Areas of emphasis are highlighted by tables and lists.

The major portion of the book is divided into chapters dealing with drug therapy for specific diseases or relative to certain body systems. Disease processes most commonly seen in the elderly population are the focus of most of the material, although the drugs acting on the central nervous system are divided into categories with pathology content secondary. Throughout these chapters the authors are consistent in their emphasis on the need for thorough patient evaluation before prescribing, that short duration drug therapy is preferable to long, and the hazards of polypharmacy.

The last four chapters address patient compliance with drug regimens. Topics covered include the background, measurement, and incidence of compliance, problems of prescriptions and packaging, and methods to improve compliance. Emphasis is placed on the responsibility of members of the healthcare team to communicate with and educate clients. Although the authors place importance on this subject, it does not lend itself to lengthy discussion, and therefore, the content is often repetitive.

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Professionals of many healthcare disciplines are increasingly interested in services intended to promote quality leisure activity for the elderly. This book is designed to be a useful resource text for those professionals, students, and volunteers responsible for leisure activity services for elderly persons functioning at a high level, low level, and with limited mobility.

The first four chapters of Leisure in Later Life nicely present background information relating to the concept of recreation and aging. Terminology is defined and topics covering demography of the older population, principles of recreational leadership, competency-based principles of program planning and two methods of program evaluation are reviewed. Chapters 5 through 8 focus on the provision of leisure activity services in different types of settings. These chapters are intended to help the reader understand why and how different styles of recreational leadership and program planning must be used to have a successful program in senior day care centers, senior centers and clubs, nursing homes, or retirement communities.

Specific ideas for various recreational programs, activities, and techniques are presented in chapters 9 through 14. Suggestions for intergenerational activities are especially practical.

Other practical suggestions for successful leisure counseling of the older adult, adapting exercise and dance for the elderly and program ideas using activities such as pet therapy, massage, drama, clowning, crafts, horticulture, humor, camping, and sports are favorably covered. The concluding chapters of 15 through 17 commendably explore the issues of recreation in hospice care, recreation and the rural elderly, and sexuality in later life.

In the preface, the authors state a desire to design a comprehensive text to fill a literary void they believe exists in the topic of recreation and aging. In my opinion, their efforts are a success.

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The authors have succeeded in putting together a useful reference for those concerned with stimulating interest in writing among persons 60 years of age and older. The content contains detailed lesson plans with outlines that include in-class exercises, resources, and home assignments. Information on how to provide a suitable environment for older adult participants is also included.

Photographs of members of the writing classes and examples of their work enhance the readability of the book. Most of all, respect of the authors for older adults comes through in this remarkable text; this book helps dispel the myth that older persons lack creative ability and cannot learn.