



Christopher Blair, DO
Software Review Editor

Stedman's Electronic Medical Dictionary

Programmers: In-house production team. System requirements: (For Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later): 486, 1 MB RAM, 13.5 MB hard disk space. (For Macintosh OS System 7.0 or later): 680X0 or Power PC, 3 MB RAM, 15 MB hard disk space. Can be used with WordPerfect 2.02, 2.1, 3.0, 3.1, and 3.5 for Macintosh; Microsoft Word 5.0, 5.1, 6.0, or 6.01 for Macintosh. CD-ROM version available. Williams & Wilkins, 351 W Camden St, Baltimore, MD 21201-2436; (800) 527-5597; \$79.95. E-mail address: cust-serv@wwilkins.com.

As a print reference, *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* has long been a standby of the medical profession for spelling, pronunciation, and general citation for the men and women in the various fields of medicine. The latest incarnation of this stalwart reference is *Stedman's Electronic Medical Dictionary 3.0*, available for incorporation into the home or office personal computer. Formatted after the 26th print edition, this computer version is available for Windows or Macintosh platforms, as well as diskette or CD-ROM format. Also currently available is *Stedman's Plus 4.0*, a tried-and-true medical and pharmaceutical spellchecker designed specifically to work in concert with many major word processing programs. (See following review.) These programs include Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, and Lotus AmiPro and WordPro.

Stedman's Electronic Medical Dictionary is just what you might expect from a medical reference created to exploit the capabilities of the PC: all the traditional benefits of spelling, pronunciation, and usage combined with advanced search functions, word and phrase associations, and useful, well thought-out hyperlink references. The program allows for immediate access via programmable "hot keys," which enables users to call up the dictionary "on-the-fly" while working on a document.

Search functions can be used to seek out a word or phrase by a variety of criteria. More than 100,000 words may be explored via instant access, or by keyboarding only part of the word. This "wildcard" search turns up on screen all combinations in the dictionary. Similarly, a "defacto" search can be conducted by keying in a portion of the word's definition. This feature is especially helpful when definitions—but not the word—can be remembered. A *history* function keeps a running track of words that have previously been looked up; a *replace* function allows users to pour instantaneous entries from the dictionary into any document. Lastly, Boolean-type search functions can be performed.

Stedman's Electronic Medical Dictionary can be customized to suit an individual's style of usage as well as aesthetics. This customization extends to the "hot key" function, which may be changed to suit each user's choice of keystrokes, choice of color for the hyperlinks, and text font size (particularly useful with a smaller screen). Other more aesthetic preference settings include the actual layout of the screen itself as pertains to whether the word lists and definitions appear above, below, or side by side; exactly which available informa-

tion is displayed (word root, pronunciations, definitions); and how much desktop space is allocated to the dictionary. *Stedman's Electronic Medical Dictionary* is designed to work alongside any word processing program or other project, as well as serving as an outstanding stand-alone program.

Although negative aspects of this program are scarce, a few do exist. Infrequent editorial oversights on spacing were noted, and the addition of the audio multimedia pronunciations rather than the more traditional text-based approach would have been welcomed. Otherwise, the program seems exceptional and a positive extension to any medical professional's computer library.

Stedman's Plus Spellchecker

System requirements: Same as that for *Stedman's Electronic Medical Encyclopedia* Price: \$99.95.

Rather than functioning as a stand-alone program, *Stedman's Plus 4.0* is designed to work in concert with any number of popular word processing programs as a medical and pharmaceutical spellchecker. More than 343,000 terms are included in this powerful—yet easy-to-use—spellchecker, including names of contemporary instruments and procedures. Multiple medical specialties are represented, such as orthopedics, cardiology, oncology, obstetrics/gynecology, radiology, and pathology. Terminology specific to genetics, statistics, and epidemiology is also entailed in the spellchecker. Perhaps its most appealing feature is its "silent partner" functionality that requires no opening of additional programs.

Although *Stedman's Plus* works well