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## *Editors' message*

CHRISTOPHER D. STILL, DO, AND MICHAEL J. KOMAR, MD  
SUPPLEMENT EDITORS

Gastrointestinal disorders are common problems, accounting for nearly one third of all visits to primary care physicians' offices. The literature of gastroenterology continues to proliferate so rapidly that even the most dedicated physician is unable to undertake a proper review. This supplement provides a review of common gastrointestinal disorders that primary physicians care for on a regular basis.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a syndrome attributed to a motor disorder of the gastrointestinal tract characterized by one or a combination of symptoms, including abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, and the passage of mucus in the stool. Irritable bowel syndrome affects up to one fifth of the population and accounts for significant physicians' visits per year. Matthew B. Grundfast, DO, and his coauthor review the newest treatment options for IBS.

Acute pancreatitis is a common disorder, affecting approximately 30 per 100,000 patients per year. Srinivasan Dubagunta, MD, and colleagues provide a concise review of the pathophysiology, differential diagnosis, and the most up-to-date treatment options for individuals who are seen with acute pancreatitis.

The inability to digest lactose, or lactose intolerance, affects 50 million Americans per year. Although this disorder is not life-threatening, it does have distressing symptoms and accounts for multiple office visits to primary care physicians. R. Alexander Rusnyk, DO, and his coauthor review the etiology, signs and symptoms, and diagnosis as well as treatment options for individuals who have lactose intolerance.

Malnutrition is a common problem affecting millions of individuals, especially the elderly and patients with underlying disease processes. Issues pertaining to parenteral and enteral nutrition are not discussed on a regular basis; however, primary care physicians are routinely asked to manage various aspects of nutritional support. Lisa L. Mulhisen, RD, PA-C, and her coauthors provide a comprehensive review of both enteral and parenteral nutrition support and define various guidelines for each modality.

Finally, Brent E. Angott, DO, and colleagues review the current medical literature pertaining to diverticular disease. Diverticular disease is a common problem, affecting 50% of people older than 80 years, with 20% requiring medical attention for complications such as diverticulitis or bleeding. This article reviews the pathophysiology and provides pertinent treatment regimens.

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