**Understanding Disease: How Your Heart, Lungs, Blood, and Blood Vessels Function and Respond to Treatment**

Glenn A. Langer, MD


Professor Glenn Langer has produced a brief but very useful book entitled “Understanding Disease” that should help patients understand cardiovascular diseases, become more knowledgeable, and have the ability to participate in the treatment of their own diseases. The book, which is 192 pages in length, has 8 chapters with the following titles: “Heart Attack,” “Heart Failure,” “Conduction Failure,” “Calcium and Digitalis Therapies,” “Respiratory Failure,” “Problems in the Vessels,” “Problems in the Blood,” and “Drugs for the Circulation.” Dr Langer uses specific patient examples to introduce each of the areas that he covers in his text. Patients and their presenting symptoms are used to heighten reader interest in each of the topics he covers. He then describes the causes of the medical problem, the physiology of that problem in lay terms so that the lay person can understand it easily, and finally the treatment. As a practicing physician, I am impressed by the easy-to-understand and real-life approach to the description of each of these topics. I think that patients and their families will be able to understand specific cardiovascular abnormalities very well after reading a chapter of special interest.

Professor Langer has provided cardiovascular medicine with a great deal of what we know about calcium, digitalis, and heart failure, and he introduces his own contributions in these areas in a very nice manner. The book also contains interesting information on the history of medicine, including details of major medical discoveries and the scientists who were involved in them, as well as the identification of Nobel Prize winners in the appropriate chapters with descriptions of their pioneering work.

I recommend this book for patients with cardiovascular disease and for their families and friends as an authoritative source for information related to specific cardiovascular problems. It is presented in a manner that is easy to understand and one that should be very useful. I think the book will allow patients and their family and friends to ask knowledgeable questions of their physicians and fully participate in the therapeutic regimens that are developed.

James T. Willerson, MD

*St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital/Texas Heart Institute*
*The University of Texas Health Science Center*
*Houston, Tex*
Understanding Disease: How Your Heart, Lungs, Blood, and Blood Vessels Function and Respond to Treatment

*Circulation*, 2001;104:e62

*Circulation* is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
Copyright © 2001 American Heart Association, Inc. All rights reserved.
Print ISSN: 0009-7322. Online ISSN: 1524-4539

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/104/12/e62

Permissions: Requests for permissions to reproduce figures, tables, or portions of articles originally published in *Circulation* can be obtained via RightsLink, a service of the Copyright Clearance Center, not the Editorial Office. Once the online version of the published article for which permission is being requested is located, click Request Permissions in the middle column of the Web page under Services. Further information about this process is available in the Permissions and Rights Question and Answer document.

Reprints: Information about reprints can be found online at:
http://www.lww.com/reprints

Subscriptions: Information about subscribing to *Circulation* is online at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org//subscriptions/