

# Book Review

*Martin Quan, MD*

**Primary Cardiology, 2nd edition. Edited by Eugene Braunwald and Lee Goldman. 721 pages, illustrated. Elsevier Science (USA), 2003.**

The challenge of writing a cardiology textbook for primary care physicians is evident when one considers the broad heterogeneity of knowledge and experience the targeted audience brings to the table. As a result, some well-intentioned authors choose to “dumb down” the material presented, writing an oversimplified, basic text best suited for medical students and physicians with limited experience in the field. Conversely, other specialist authors choose to ignore the uniqueness of the target audience and write the material as if it were intended for readers like themselves, producing an encyclopedic text that requires even the most seasoned primary care physician to painstakingly plow through the pages in return for a morsel of content directly relevant to day-to-day clinical practice. Edited by world-renown cardiologist Eugene Braunwald and Lee Goldman, an internist widely acclaimed in his own right, **Primary Cardiology** is one of the few primary care textbooks written by specialists that avoids these pitfalls and succeeds in being a useful resource for primary care physicians irrespective of their level of training and experience.

Despite being a compendium of chapters written by a number of leading specialists, **Primary Cardiology** is clear and consistent in its writing style and tone and moves in almost a seamless fashion from chapter to chapter. The book is composed of 4 sections. The first section provides the reader with an understanding of core cardiologic principles upon which the subsequent chapters are based. In keeping with the growing emphasis on evidence-based medicine, this section kicks off with thoughtful and clearly written chapters addressing the principles of evidence-based medicine and clinical decision-making followed by a discussion of the diagnostic tools used in cardiology. The second section presents clinical cardiology in a problem-oriented format, providing the reader with a concise but authoritative approach to common cardiology problems likely to present in clinical practice. Addressed are bread-and-butter topics such as chest pain, dyspnea, edema, heart murmurs, and the preoperative evaluation and care of the patient undergoing noncardiac surgery. Preventive cardiology is a mainstay of primary care practice and section three provides a fairly comprehensive and updated clinical discussion on interventions in this arena. The final or fourth section provides a more in-depth look at specific cardiac conditions likely to be seen in primary care practice, providing both a useful overview of fundamental concepts as well as clinical guidelines applicable to patient care.

**Primary Cardiology** is that hard-to-find cardiology textbook written by specialists that addresses the needs of the primary care audience as a whole. Readers seeking to build a core foundation in cardiology will find this book to be a very readable, comprehensive primer. Experienced and knowledgeable primary care clinicians will find it to be not only a practical and authoritative review of areas of clinical cardiology that they manage in their day-to-day practices but also a resource that will likely become a valued desk reference.