

INTRODUCTION

This volume explores practical issues regarding geriatric musculoskeletal disorders. As the geriatric population continues to grow, the evaluation and treatment of mobility disorders will become increasingly important.

I will introduce the basic concepts of gait and an increasingly needed clinically logical classification system.

Dr. Siebens has recently gained national prominence for her work in this area. Her article regarding geriatric conditioning programs discusses the utility of encouraging the aged to remain active.

On the other end of the spectrum, Dr. Jackson addresses the issues of the ageless athlete from the perspective of a physician who is also an experienced triathlete. His article reminds us of the human performance levels that can be reached and maintained by the elderly.

Dr. Atchison discusses the importance of quantifying the gains in strength acquired by a practical exercise program to enhance mobility in the elderly. Dr. Atchison's research is funded by the Chicago Retirement Research Foundation.

Our colleague from Canada, Dr. Teasell, brings to our attention the practical issues regarding the management of shoulder dysfunction in the elderly. The style of practice he describes for this common diagnostic dilemma is pertinent in light of the health care reform issues presently challenging us. More specifically, Dr. Garrett delves further into the rheumatologic aspects of shoulder problems. As a practicing internist, rheumatologist, and physiatrist, she brings a unique perspective to a difficult problem.

The article by Dr. Stewart underscores the fact that stroke rehabilitation is efficacious in the elderly population and that by itself should not preclude good rehabilitation outcomes.

Finally, health care policy regarding the aged is discussed in a commentary by Dr. Costich.

It is a privilege and a pleasure to present this issue of the journal. Special thanks to Karen Rucker, Donna Kinder, Steve Jenkins, and my author colleagues for making this issue possible.

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