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Preface

This book is a collection of multiple choice questions (MCQs) to promote the learning of pharmacology in the framework of preclinical and clinical disciplines. The main features of the book are the following:

- The MCQs are all of the type that is used for the step 1 medical board exams in the United States and are written according to United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) guidelines (i.e., patient-centered vignettes). All questions are “one best answer”; in most cases, there are five answer choices, but in some cases six or seven answer choices are given.
- Because the MCQs are about pharmacology, each question mentions a drug or a drug class either in the stem or as the answer choices.
- Each MCQ is provided with a level of difficulty, a learning objective, the correct answer, and an explanation.
- There are three levels of difficulty: easy, medium, and hard.
- The learning objective is a brief behavioral statement written using an action verb. If a student can perform that action, then he or she should be able to answer the question correctly. The explanation includes both the reasons why a given answer is correct and why the distractors are wrong.
- Many questions are related to the highest levels of Bloom’s taxonomy (e.g., interpretation of data and solution of problems) rather than being simple recall questions.
- For each drug or drug class, the concepts asked by the MCQs are related to mode of action, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, adverse effects, interactions, or clinical uses.
- Most MCQs are integrated questions, and a good knowledge of the relevant human physiology, biochemistry, pathology, microbiology, and/or elementary clinical medicine is a necessary prerequisite to determine the right answer to the question. Therefore, the question with its answer explanation can also be used as a powerful tool for reviewing and integrating the medical science disciplines.
- The MCQs are grouped in chapters covering most topics presented in standard pharmacology textbooks. There are 20 to 50 MCQs in each chapter, totaling over 1500 questions.

MCQs are the learning tool most frequently used by medical students. This book is intended as an integrated tool for both course study and board exam preparation. Because the book is organized along clinical rather than strictly pharmacological lines, it should be useful for both step 1 and step 2 exam preparation.

Pharmacology is a fast-evolving discipline. The authors have checked sources believed to be reliable, in order to provide information that is in accordance with the currently accepted standards. However, the authors are aware that in several instances the pharmacotherapy of disease is still controversial. They have tried, as much as possible, to avoid questions addressing controversial issues.

This book is not intended to be a substitute for pharmacology textbooks. Students are strongly advised to consult their textbooks of pharmacology for more in-depth coverage of the subject matter.

Mario Babbini, MD, PhD
Mary Thomas, PhD