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# Andrews' Diseases of the Skin: Clinical Dermatology

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When George Clinton Andrews, an outstanding New York diagnostician and therapeutic maven, published his *Diseases of the Skin: A Text-Book for Practitioners and Students* more than 80 years ago, the dermatologic community took notice, albeit with mixed reviews. Who in 1930 would have been able to predict that an 11th edition would now be in the limelight? The competition at the time included Stelwagon and Gaskill's full-sized treatise,<sup>1</sup> last revised in 1921 and considered by many to be the most thorough textbook of the era, as well as the latest texts by Sutton<sup>2</sup> and Ormsby.<sup>3</sup> These would go through several editions, but none ever lasted as long as Andrews' text.

**ANDREWS' DISEASES OF THE SKIN: CLINICAL DERMATOLOGY**

By William D. James, Timothy G. Berger, and Dirk M. Elston  
11th ed, Philadelphia, PA, Elsevier/Saunders, 2011  
ISBN-13: 978-1-4377-0314-6

WHEN GEORGE CLINTON ANDREWS, AN OUTSTANDING New York diagnostician and therapeutic maven, published his *Diseases of the Skin: A Text-Book for Practitioners and Students* more than 80 years ago, the dermatologic community took notice, albeit with mixed reviews. Who in 1930 would have been able to predict that an 11th edition would now be in the limelight? The competition at the time included Stelwagon and Gaskill's full-sized treatise,<sup>1</sup> last revised in 1921 and considered by many to be the most thorough textbook of the era, as well as the latest texts by Sutton<sup>2</sup> and Ormsby.<sup>3</sup> These would go through several editions, but none ever lasted as long as Andrews' text.

*Andrews' Diseases of the Skin*—or simply *Andrews*, as most North American dermatologists and dermatologists-in-training refer to it—has always been intended to be a mid-sized book, one comprising no more than a 1000 pages, although a few editions have bulged over the limit. Past editors—including such distinguished practitioners as Anthony Domonkos, Harry Arnold, Richard Odom, and Timothy Berger—revised the book in its various editions, ensuring that it would be the most up-to-date source “for practitioners and students.”

The current editors, each a renowned clinician in his own right, have made this textbook even more valuable. Color illustrations are now included throughout, replacing all of the black-and-white photographs worthy of note in the first edition. The text has been thoroughly revised, and the references, uniform in style, are current and on target. Among other positive factors, the 11th edition has a typeface and font size that any reader will be able to enjoy. There may be a temptation in revising a text to be lenient with some descriptions or treatments once in the mainstream and now considered quaint, but the current editors have been rigorous in bringing all aspects of the book up to a contemporary standard.

Common dermatologic entities are treated with as much concise detail as the more esoteric. For example, acne is succinctly described: “Acne vulgaris is a chronic inflammatory disease of the pilo-sebaceous follicles, characterized by comedones, papules, pustules, nodules, and often scars. The comedo is the primary lesion of acne . . .” (p 228).

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Topical treatments discussed include retinoids, salicylic acid, azelaic acid, benzyl peroxide, and other keratolytics, each presented in a straightforward manner so the clinician can readily select an appropriate modality. Unusual conditions that few readers might recognize or even recall, eg, Lafora disease, are presented with information and sources sufficient for further investigation, should this be needed. Lafora disease, an autosomal-recessive entity, concerns epilepsy, both myoclonic and tonic-clonic. The cutaneous findings are rarely noted but include “papulonodular lesions on the ears and indurated, thickened plaques on the arms” (p 535).

Contributor Isaac Neuhaus has been charged with making the surgical chapters relevant. Whether the entry is about the use of antimicrobials as prophylaxis for cutaneous surgery, the selection of patients for Mohs micrographic surgery, or the appropriate use of lasers in dermatologic practice, the reader will find focused and succinct presentations.

The book also discusses cosmetic dermatology. The reader will not necessarily be able to perform these procedures from the presentations, but the information provided is sufficient for the practitioner to understand what is involved.

For readers who want additional images and the luxury of Internet access, an online version is available. Readers learn from the preface to *Andrews' Diseases of the Skin* that the book is globally recognized as the leading mid-sized textbook in dermatology, as evidenced by the thousands of copies ordered from outside of the United States by Brazilian and Chinese clinicians. Dermatologists and other physicians with an interest in dermatology will benefit, as will their patients, by having a copy of this book available for ready reference.

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2. Sutton RL. *Diseases of the Skin*. 7th ed. St. Louis, MO: CV Mosby; 1928.
3. Ormsby OS. *A Practical Treatise on Diseases of the Skin, for the Use of Students and Practitioners*. 3rd ed. Philadelphia, PA: Lea & Febiger; 1927.

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