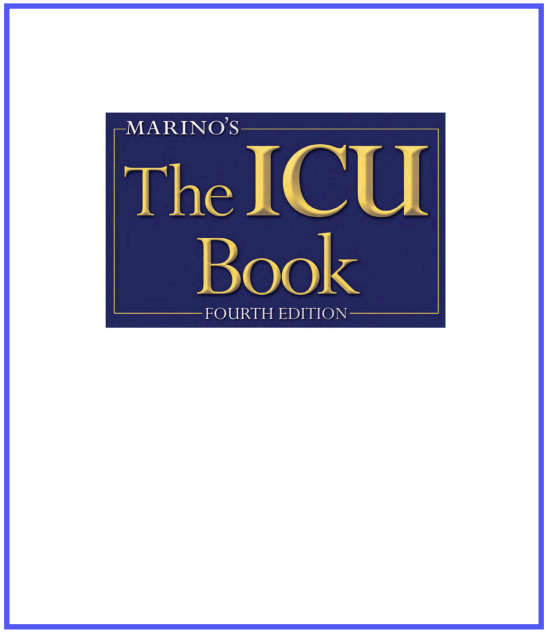


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I would especially commend the physician who,
in acute diseases,
by which the bulk of mankind are cut off,
conducts the treatment better than others.

HIPPOCRATES

The fourth edition of *The ICU Book* marks its 23rd year as a fundamental sourcebook for the care of critically ill patients. This edition continues the original intent to provide a "generic textbook" that presents fundamental concepts and patient care practices that can be used in any adult intensive care unit, regardless of the specialty focus of the unit. Highly specialized topics, such as obstetrical emergencies, burn care, and traumatic injuries, are left to more qualified specialty textbooks.

This edition has been reorganized and completely rewritten, with updated references and clinical practice guidelines included at the end of each chapter. The text is supplemented by 246 original illustrations and 199 original tables, and five new chapters have been added: Vascular Catheters (Chapter 1), Occupational Exposures (Chapter 4), Alternate Modes of Ventilation (Chapter 27), Pancreatitis and Liver Failure (Chapter 39), and Nonpharmaceutical Toxidromes (Chapter 55). Each chapter ends with a brief section entitled "A Final Word," which highlights an insight or emphasizes the salient information presented in the chapter.

The ICU Book is unique in that it represents the voice of a single author, which provides a uniformity in style and conceptual framework. While some bias is inevitable in such an endeavor, the opinions expressed in this book are rooted in experimental observations rather than anecdotal experiences, and the hope is that any remaining bias is tolerable.

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