
"In the history of medicine, few innovations have so profoundly influenced the future as has cardiac catheterization."

While the author's opening statement is certainly an overembellishment, one should not minimize the importance of cardiac catheterization, for it has facilitated intensive investigation into the physiology and anatomy of the entire circulatory system. Dr. Clark's book, Coronary Angioplasty, is broad in its scope. It deals with numerous concerns particular to cardiac catheterization: selection of patients for percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA), PTCA in acute myocardial infarctions, recurrent stenosis following successful PTCA, and complications of coronary angioplasty. In addition, there are several chapters which deal extensively with complex PTCA in the setting of total occlusions, bifurcation lesions, and multiple vessel disease. While these chapters are short, they provide valuable background information and statistics as well as suggestions for equipment selection in dealing with these complex lesions, which are usually associated with a lower success rate.

In general, this book is a thorough treatment of the practical aspects of coronary angioplasty, and, while it devotes numerous chapters to issues of particular concern and relevance, it remains comprehensive. Two strengths of the volume are:

1. The chapter on the history of cardiac catheterization gives the reader a sense of the evolution of this technique, thereby adding an additional dimension to the reader's perspective.
2. The twenty-seven case presentations at the end of the book in Appendix I nicely illustrate the anatomy of various coronary artery lesions and the problems and strategies involved in reducing the pressure gradients across these lesions.

The author may perhaps have considered including several of these cases within the body of the text, especially when trying to illustrate the use of cardiac catheterization to reduce complex lesions, as discussed above.

I would recommend this volume to the reader interested in a relatively complete introduction to cardiac catheterization. It should be reemphasized that the book deals primarily with the practical aspects of this technique rather than more theoretical concerns such as mechanisms of action and pathological changes.

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