

## Reviews of Books and Software

*Spanish/English Handbook for Medical Professionals* (4th Edition). Jesus Perez-Sabido. Practice Management Information Corporation, Los Angeles, Calif, 1994, 387 pp, \$29.95. ISBN 1-878487-61-2.

The fourth edition of the book by Jesus Perez-Sabido is an excellent text that is comprehensive, well written, and easy to read. Written to provide the reader with basic and practical information about English/Spanish translations of common medical words and phrases, this is not a medical textbook, but a practical bilingual guide for both English and Spanish-speaking people in the health professions.

The book is organized with facing pages alternating in English and Spanish such that one can easily look up phrases in either language and immediately see what the appropriate translation would be. The book is written for persons whose primary language is either English or Spanish and can easily be used from either point of lingual origin.

Included are pronunciation guides in both languages, sections on obtaining a medical history, and questions appropriate to the full range of organ systems in medicine. The book also includes a section entitled "Patient Information on Tests and Special Care Situations" that can assist the health professional in preparing patients undergoing special procedures such as barium enemas, bronchoscopy, imaging studies, and invasive procedures. In addition, there is a section entitled "How to Interpret Laboratory Tests" that provides explanations of laboratory results appropriate for patients.

There are also sections on dentistry, geriatrics, genetics, pediatrics, and sensitive issues, including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. There are two sections dealing with emergencies: the first has questions for emergency evaluation and the second deals with first aid. It is evident that the author has gone to great lengths to provide accurate information.

Translations in the book are technically and linguistically correct. My only reservation concerns the lack of attention to regional or colloquial terms used by the wide range of Hispanics in the United States. Mexican Americans in the Southwest, Puerto Ricans in the Northeast, Cubans in Florida, and other American Spanish-speaking groups use a variety of terms for the same medical conditions.

This book should be available to physicians, dentists, students, and other health professionals, including volunteers and aides, who wish to have accurate translations in Spanish or English. The reviewer, whose medical education was in English, found this book to be a refreshing and easy-to-use method of learning technically correct terms in Spanish.

Since I have not seen prior editions of this text, I cannot determine what additions have been made in the updated version. I plan, nonetheless, to keep the 4th edition of the *Spanish/English Handbook* handy, and am grateful for the work by Professor Perez-Sabido.

Carlos A. Moreno, MD  
University of Texas Health Science  
Center at San Antonio,  
San Antonio, Texas

### Software Reviews

Gary N. Fox, MD, Section Editor

HEALTHDESK, Version 1.0C (1993). Healthdesk Corp, 1801 Fifth St, Berkeley, CA 94701 (510-843-8110). \$59.95. DOCUMENTATION: 44-page, easy-to-read well-illustrated booklet.

HOW SUPPLIED: Two 720K (3.5-in.) diskettes.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: IBM compatible 386 or 486 processor, 5MB of hard drive space, 2MB RAM (4 MB recommended), VGA monitor, Microsoft Windows 3.0 or higher, Microsoft Windows compatible mouse.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT: Not toll-free; phone: (510) 843-8110; fax: (510) 845-8305.

GUARANTEE: 60-day money-back guarantee.

RATING: Very good.

Skeptical, then intrigued, and finally amazed, that was the progression of my feelings as I began to use the *Healthdesk* "personal wellness software." Designed as a health management tool for the layman, this is the ideal purchase to recommend to your computer-literate and health-conscious patients.

I reviewed this program 1 month after beginning to use Windows, so I was a little fearful as I removed the diskettes from the package. However, I easily found the Install page of the booklet and jumped in with both feet. Installation was a breeze, and a smile crossed my face as I

was rewarded with the first screen showing an animated runner breaking the tape. From that point on, the screens were so clear and self-evident, even to one so new to Windows, that I explored the whole program without referring to the instruction booklet even once. I wish all software were so easy to navigate.

The Welcome Screen allows users to list names (up to 10 family members). Click a name, and up comes a personalized Home Screen, divided into a Medical Records section and a Health Managers section.

The Medical Records section is a personal health information database. It is divided into 11 subsections, each easily accessed with an icon button. This intriguing personal "computerized medical record" would surpass many physicians' charting systems for completeness. Included are forms for demographic data, personal health problems, family health problems, immunizations, professionals consulted, hospitalizations, laboratory test results, symptoms, and even a record of medical expenses. Scroll lists allow quick and convenient entry of common medical conditions with a click of the mouse.

The Health Managers section provides both outstanding patient education and an easy way for patients to track their personal health-related behaviors: exercise, weight, stress, heart health, and women's health. *Healthdesk* has some amazing animated graphics to accompany very complete, written health information. The process of arteriosclerosis is dramatically depicted. The program includes actions of basic muscle groups as well as exercises to keep them toned, and the Food Pyramid, which has such an extensive explanation of food choices that some patients might find the counseling of a dietician redundant. In the Heart Health section, users can track systolic and diastolic blood pressure, resting and walking heart rate, and lipid levels in both graphic and chart form. There is a self-assessment icon that asks a few questions about health-related behaviors, integrates the answers with data from the Medical Records section, and then provides a health-status analysis. Finally, one can click the Resources button and scan a list of organizations from which to obtain further information. For instance, organizations such as Mended Hearts and the American Heart Association are listed. By

clicking on an organization, one can obtain the address, telephone number, hours of business, and a description of the services offered by that organization.

Because this product is so simple to use and provides so much pertinent information, I will be recommending it to many of my health-conscious and computer-literate patients. It is a reasonably priced and well-designed product that I believe all family physicians should consider as a patient education tool.

William J. Geiger, MD  
Toledo, Ohio

**LHMP: LIFETIME HEALTH MONITORING PLAN, Version 4.0 (1993).** MicroHealth Software, PO Box 98471, Raleigh, NC 27624-8471 (919-954-0807). \$88.00 for the first user, and \$9 per additional work station at the same site.

**DOCUMENTATION:** On-line documentation only.

**HOW SUPPLIED:** A single 3.5-in. or 5.25-in. disk.

**HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:** IBM-compatible personal computer with 8088 or higher processor, DOS 3.0 or higher, floppy disk drive, monochrome or color mouse. No hard drive required.

**MOUSE SUPPORT:** No.

**TOLL-FREE CUSTOMER SUPPORT:** No. Telephone support available at no charge via toll call.

**DEMONSTRATION DISKS:** Yes; \$9 charge, which can be applied to purchase price.

**MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE:** No.

**RATING:** Marginal.

**LHMP: Lifetime Health Monitoring Plan** is a DOS program designed to help physicians and other health care providers generate customized health maintenance plans for their patients. In a typical session, the patient would sit down at the computer with a physician or other caregiver who would ask a series of questions. Alternatively, users could fill in a paper form generated by the computer, and the information could be entered and analyzed at a later time.

The user indicates for how many years a profile should be generated, and enters basic demographic information such as the name, medical record or social security number, sex, height, year of birth, race (white or nonwhite), and whether the patient is "socioeconomically disadvantaged." Patients are also asked whether they smoke cigarettes, chew tobacco, or use alcohol. The presence of occupational hazards, chronic illness re-

quiring pneumonia vaccination, adequate nutritional status, adequate living environment, and adequate activity level are each assessed with a single yes or no question. Finally, patients are asked whether they have had a physical examination in the past 5 years, are taking any medications, wear glasses, wish to pursue an aerobic exercise program, or have any first-degree relatives with colorectal cancer.

Once the data have been entered, the operator presses a key and a report is printed. The information is organized by year, with specific recommendations based on the patient's responses, and a set of rules (an algorithm) programmed into the software. For example, if the patient is over 60 years old or has a chronic illness, and has not had the pneumonia vaccine, the vaccine is recommended. On the last page, general wellness goals such as "cessation of tobacco use" are listed, also based on patient data and the software's algorithm.

The program has several strengths. Once installed, it is so easy to use that even computer novices should have little difficulty entering data and generating reports. The program runs on even the most primitive DOS computers and produces clearly labeled reports. Environmental and occupational hazards are noted, as is the emphasis on educational interventions. However, significant concerns about the user interface and the program's internal logic prevent me from recommending it to family physicians.

Chief among my concerns regarding the user interface is that users cannot return to previously answered questions. For example, if the female user inadvertently enters "M" instead of "F" in response to the sex question, the error can be corrected only by restarting the program. This is a serious limitation, since data entry errors (and patients changing their mind about some responses) commonly occur. In addition, it is not possible to store patient profiles for later printout or reference, and the lack of documentation of the installation process could be troublesome for novice users.

The other major area of concern is the nature of the rules used to generate patient recommendations. According to the developer, they are a synthesis of recommendations from the literature, based on a review by three content experts. In a number of cases, these recommendations are not consistent with those of the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) or other major organizations. Examples of questionable recommendations (and

# YOCON<sup>®</sup>

## Yohimbine HCl

**Description:** Yohimbine is a 3a-15a-20B-17a-hydroxy Yohimbine-16a-carboxylic acid methyl ester. The alkaloid is found in Rubiaceae and related trees. Also in Rauwolfia Serpentina (L) Benth. Yohimbine is an indolalkylamine alkaloid with chemical similarity to reserpine. It is a crystalline powder, odorless. Each compressed tablet contains (1/12 gr.) 5.4 mg of Yohimbine Hydrochloride.

**Action:** Yohimbine blocks presynaptic alpha-2 adrenergic receptors. Its action on peripheral blood vessels resembles that of reserpine, though it is weaker and of short duration. Yohimbine's peripheral autonomic nervous system effect is to increase parasympathetic (cholinergic) and decrease sympathetic (adrenergic) activity. It is to be noted that in male sexual performance, erection is linked to cholinergic activity and to alpha-2 adrenergic blockade which may theoretically result in increased penile inflow, decreased penile outflow or both.

Yohimbine exerts a stimulating action on the mood and may increase anxiety. Such actions have not been adequately studied or related to dosage although they appear to require high doses of the drug. Yohimbine has a mild anti-diuretic action, probably via stimulation of hypothalamic centers and release of posterior pituitary hormone.

Reportedly, Yohimbine exerts no significant influence on cardiac stimulation and other effects mediated by B-adrenergic receptors, its effect on blood pressure, if any, would be to lower it; however no adequate studies are at hand to quantitate this effect in terms of Yohimbine dosage.

**Indications:** Yoccon<sup>®</sup> is indicated as a sympatholytic and mydriatic. It may have activity as an aphrodisiac.

**Contraindications:** Renal diseases, and patient's sensitive to the drug. In view of the limited and inadequate information at hand, no precise tabulation can be offered of additional contraindications.

**Warning:** Generally, this drug is not proposed for use in females and certainly must not be used during pregnancy. Neither is this drug proposed for use in pediatric, geriatric or cardio-renal patients with gastric or duodenal ulcer history. Nor should it be used in conjunction with mood-modifying drugs such as antidepressants, or in psychiatric patients in general.

**Adverse Reactions:** Yohimbine readily penetrates the (CNS) and produces a complex pattern of responses in lower doses than required to produce peripheral alpha-adrenergic blockade. These include, anti-diuresis, a general picture of central excitation including elevation of blood pressure and heart rate, increased motor activity, irritability and tremor. Sweating, nausea and vomiting are common after parenteral administration of the drug.<sup>1-3</sup> Also dizziness, headache, skin flushing reported when used orally.<sup>1-3</sup>

**Dosage and Administration:** Experimental dosage reported in treatment of erectile impotence.<sup>1-3</sup> 1 tablet (5.4 mg) 3 times a day, to adult males taken orally. Occasional side effects reported with this dosage are nausea, dizziness or nervousness. In the event of side effects dosage to be reduced to 1/2 tablet 3 times a day, followed by gradual increases to 1 tablet 3 times a day. Reported therapy not more than 10 weeks.<sup>1</sup>

**How Supplied:** Oral tablets of YOCON<sup>®</sup> 1/12 gr. 5.4mg in bottles of 100's NDC 53159-001-01, 1000's NDC 53159-001-10 and Blister-Paks of 30's NDC 53159-001-30

#### References:

1. A. Morales et al., New England Journal of Medicine: 1221, November 12, 1981.
2. Goodman, Gilman — The Pharmacological basis of Therapeutics 6th ed., p. 176-188. McMillan December Rev. 1/85.
3. Weekly Urological Clinical letter, 27:2, July 4, 1983.
4. A. Morales et al., The Journal of Urology 128: 45-47, 1982.



Available at pharmacies nationwide

**PALISADES  
PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.**

64 North Summit Street  
Tenafly, New Jersey 07670  
(201) 569-8502  
(800) 237-9083

the corresponding USPSTF recommendation) include: a baseline electrocardiogram for all patients over age 35 (recommended by USPSTF only if a cardiac event would endanger public safety); spirometry prior to beginning an aerobic exercise program (not recommended); stool for occult blood annually for all adults over age 40, or age 30 if a history of colorectal cancer in a first-degree relative (over age 50 only if there are known risk factors for colorectal cancer); and annual mammography for all women age 40 and older (every 1 to 2 years for women over age 50). Since screening recommendations differ between advisory groups, since they are likely to change over time, and since physicians may want to develop their own set of criteria, the program should allow users to specify their own rules for screening and health maintenance. The developer stated that a "custom" version of the program could be created, but this additional cost and inconvenience is unreasonable when the same goal could be achieved by storing the rules in a user-accessible database.

In summary, the program has an unsatisfactory interface, makes recommendations that are not supported by the preventive medicine literature, and is inflexible. Therefore, I cannot recommend it to family physicians.

Mark H. Ebell, MD  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, Michigan

# Presenting the U.S. Savings Bonds that money alone can't buy.



There's only one way to get Series HH Savings Bonds: Exchange Series E/EE Savings Bonds and Savings Notes for them.

HH Savings Bonds, of course, offer the security of knowing your investment is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. They also offer tax advantages.

With HH Bonds, you'll receive interest payments every six months for up to 20 years. That interest is exempt from state and local income taxes, although it's subject to annual federal income tax reporting. If, however, you've deferred reporting the interest earned on your E/EE Bonds, you may continue to do so for up to 20 more years or until you redeem the HH Bond, whichever comes first. Or you can report the accumulated interest when you exchange your E/EE Bonds for HH Bonds.

Ask about the Bonds money alone can't buy, Series HH Bonds, where you bank, or write: U.S. Savings Bonds Division, Department of the Treasury, Box HH, Washington, DC 20226.

**For a recorded message of current rate information, call  
1-800-4US BOND • 1-800-487-2663**

Certain restrictions apply. Ask for details.



A public service of this magazine