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Griffith's Instructions for Patients

Sixth Edition

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Tucson, Arizona

With the assistance of Jo A. Griffith

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Preface to the Sixth Edition

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INSTRUCTIONS

H. Winter Griffith, M.D. (1926-1993)

Dr. H. Winter Griffith knew medicine from two perspectives—as an experienced clinician and as a patient. For twenty-five years Winter battled severe cardiovascular disease. As a patient, he received the finest medicine had to offer, including, at age 64, a heart transplant. He understood that the benefits of medical science were fully realized only when the patient was a partner with the physician in the management of illness. With this perspective, Winter devoted most of the past two decades doing what he could to improve patient education. His efforts include twenty-seven books, some for students and practitioners and some for patients themselves.

As the copier became widely available in physicians' offices, he saw the potential of clearly written, authoritative, and individualized information becoming easily available for each patient. *Instructions for Patients*, his first major effort directed to his colleagues as patient educators, was the result.

Winter passed away at age 67. His efforts continue to be perpetuated with the help of others concerned with patient education and the support of the publisher, W.B. Saunders Company. I am sure Winter would be proud of this, the 6th edition of *Instructions for Patients*.

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PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

This fifth edition of *Instructions for Patients* is an expanded version of the previous four editions. The pages of this book will provide masters for you to use with your copy machine. They provide easy-to-comprehend, basic instructions for patients to read and study at a later time away from your office. The fifth edition differs from the other four in content in the following ways:

- There are 200 additional titles for problems that patients bring to physicians.
- The format was revised so that the reader can find pertinent information more easily.
- Titles, including diets, published in the four previous editions have been reviewed and updated.

With these information and instruction sheets in your office, you have an opportunity to provide preplanned, printed materials to patients and their families at a time when they are most motivated to learn—when there is a problem and they have come to you for help. These handouts provide quick, inexpensive, and effective supplements to personal contact. If patients perceive the materials distributed to them as an extension of the physician, the instruction sheets become a powerful teaching tool. They help to reinforce oral instructions and to refresh the patient's memory.

The pages of this book, plus an office copy machine, make it possible for you to

- Have a comprehensive selection of teaching materials quickly available in one place.
- Save storage space for other teaching aids.
- Avoid depending on outside commercial or government sources that may stop printing good materials just as you have become accustomed to and dependent on using them.

If your copy machine accepts book pages for copying, there is no need to remove these pages from the book. If your copier accepts only single sheets, tear the pages along the perforations and preserve them in a loose-leaf binder for future use. Either way, a photocopy of the instruction sheet makes it possible for the patient to read and reread information and instructions away from your office. These sheets will prove most helpful when they are incorporated in your total treatment plan. Please don't expect them to stand alone.

Feel free to copy these pages to distribute to your patients. Or use them for a first draft to compose your own. Keep an extra copy of the index in each examining room so that you can make a note of the page number that your staff can copy for the patient. Maintain a printed supply of all the illustrations of the body parts (in the Appendix section) to help you fully explain to patients what is involved in their illness.

We sincerely hope that these pages from the fifth edition of *Instructions for Patients* will prove useful to you and your patients.

H. Winter Griffith, M.D.

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

As a practicing family physician, I place a tremendous amount of importance on my patients' understanding of their particular ailments. I cannot stress enough how important it is to the healing process for patients to fully comprehend all aspects of their condition. Continuing with Dr. Griffith's work, this, the sixth edition, revises and updates all the topics from the fifth edition and includes more than twenty new topics.

Stephen W. Moore, M.D.

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Jo A. Griffith
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