

# Nutrition: introduction

David Silk

I am very pleased to have been asked by Professor Dame Parveen Kumar to edit this edition of *Medicine*, on clinical nutrition. Professor Mike Lean was the stalwart of the last edition, both editing and very significantly contributing to it. In this edition, I have tried to follow his lead in devoting approximately half of the allocated space to over- and undernutrition.

The National Health Service, and indeed the whole of the UK, is facing two important epidemics: obesity and disease-related malnutrition. I am grateful to Professor Lean for updating his contributions on the principles of human nutrition and the management of obesity and overweight. Dr Adrian Park writes authoritatively on the pathophysiology, aetiology and medical consequences of obesity, as does Dr Julie Lanigan in relation to childhood obesity and Amanda Adler on evidence and issues in

addressing cost-effectiveness in treating obesity. Importantly, Professor Ameet Patel eloquently describes the surgical approaches to the management of morbid obesity. As far as undernutrition or malnutrition is concerned, Dr Emilie Combet and Dr Christina Buckton tackle the thorny subject of micronutrient deficiency, vitamin pills and nutritional supplements.

My friends and close colleagues have contributed very significantly to the articles on undernutrition. These authors include Dr John Saunders, Dr Trevor Smith, Professor Mike Stroud, Dr Tim Bowling, Dr Simon Gabe, Mr John MacFie and Ms Clare McNaught, all giants in their respective fields. This leaves the contributions of Joanne Bartleman on paediatric nutrition, and the most excellent article by Susan Jebb and Dimitrios Koutoukidis on public health.

I am particularly grateful to Rachel Carnell, Managing Editor of Publisher Elsevier Ltd, for her encouragement and invaluable help throughout. It has been a real pleasure working with everybody and I hope the readership enjoy and learn much from the edition. ◆

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