

Preface

A 56-year-old man presented the prior evening with a troponin positive acute coronary syndrome. After an uneventful night the patient's treatment strategy was being discussed at morning CCU rounds with due attention paid to 'evidenced based medicine.' The residents presented a variety of management strategies with enthusiastic defence of each proposal. "These are all reasonable plans," I interjected, "but what would the evidence have us do?" The response was considerably less enthusiastic. "Well there are only a thousand studies in cardiology, why is it so difficult to remember them all," I commented, trying to sound funny. "Yes there are a thousand studies so why isn't there a book on the most important ones?" asked one thoughtful resident.

This book was thus created in response to voiced frustrations among junior medicine, cardiology and off-service residents rotating through cardiology as well as non-cardiologist physicians who are overwhelmed by the sheer number of cardiology trials. After repeated requests for references of 'just the important trials' or 'just the trials that changed practice,' Craig and I decided to compile a user-friendly quick-reference guide of the '25 trials' that had the biggest impact on clinical practice across the breadth of cardiovascular medicine.

Naturally, the most difficult and contentious part of writing this handbook was to select a limited number of landmark studies that really changed the way cardiology is practised today. We thought long and hard about our selections and sought thoughtful opinions from our colleagues such as Dr. Rob Welsh, who himself has been involved in numerous international studies, and ultimately decided upon the list published here. We really tried to key in on trials that residents and non-cardiologists need to know about. We hope the addition of our editorial remarks will facilitate understanding by placing each trial in context and emphasizing important strengths or limitations in the interpretation of trial results. We used published editorial remarks, consensus opinions as well as our personal judgment to give a balanced view — you will be the judge of how we succeeded.

If you want to order copies of this book or have any comments or suggestions for the future updates, please contact Dr. Gabor Gyenes at ggyenes@cha.ab.ca. The digital version will be available after November 2006 from www.skyscape.com. We hope this book will be a useful and relevant companion to you.

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