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Editorial Review

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First published in 1995, *The American Heritage Stedman's Medical Dictionary* "is designed for general readers and professionals in the allied medical fields, law, and the insurance industry." Words have brief definitions that are meant to provide "an appropriate level of technical language without including excessive detail."

The entries are alphabetical, letter by letter, with cross-references for variants, symbols, and synonyms. Some entries have black-and-white line drawings. To enhance accessibility, the editors have avoided the traditional subentry format in most medical dictionaries, which puts a long list of terms under a main entry. For example, Tourette's syndrome is found under *Tourette's* rather than under *syn drome*. A "Subentry Index" serves to group terms under the more general headings. In addition, nonspecialist terms are preferred; a user looking up the word *leukocyte* will find a *see* reference to *white* blood cell. However, those unfamiliar with medical terminology will need further clarification after reading the definition: "Any of the colorless or white cells in the blood that have a nucleus and cytoplasm and help protect the body from infection through specialized neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes." Individual entries for each of these cells do not offer much assistance.

The dictionary also has more than 300 very short biographical entries for those who have contributed to medical science, such as Marie Curie, Rene Laennec, and Ivan Pavlov. There are anatomical charts, a periodic table, measurement and metric conversion tables, a chart of first aid for burns, and dietary guidelines and Recommended Daily Allowances (RDAs) at the end of the book. The RDA information is from 1989, rather than the revised 2001 allowances.

Although this dictionary would be sufficient for a small office or home collection, libraries serving students and the public will find the sixth edition of *Mosby's Medical, Nursing, & Allied Health Dictionary* (6th ed., 2002) more useful. It has more entries; clearer, more detailed definitions; and 2,200 color illustrations. *RBB*
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About the Author

The Editors of the American Heritage Dictionaries and of other reference titles published by Houghton Mifflin Company are trained lexicographers with a varied array of interests and expertise. Most of the editors hold graduate degrees and have studied at least one foreign language. Several have degrees in linguistics or in the history of the English language. Others have degrees in science or sometimes other disciplines. All the editors familiarize themselves with the vocabulary in specific subject areas, collect materials on new developments and usage, and work in association with consultants to ensure that the content of our publications is as accurate and as up-to-date as possible.

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