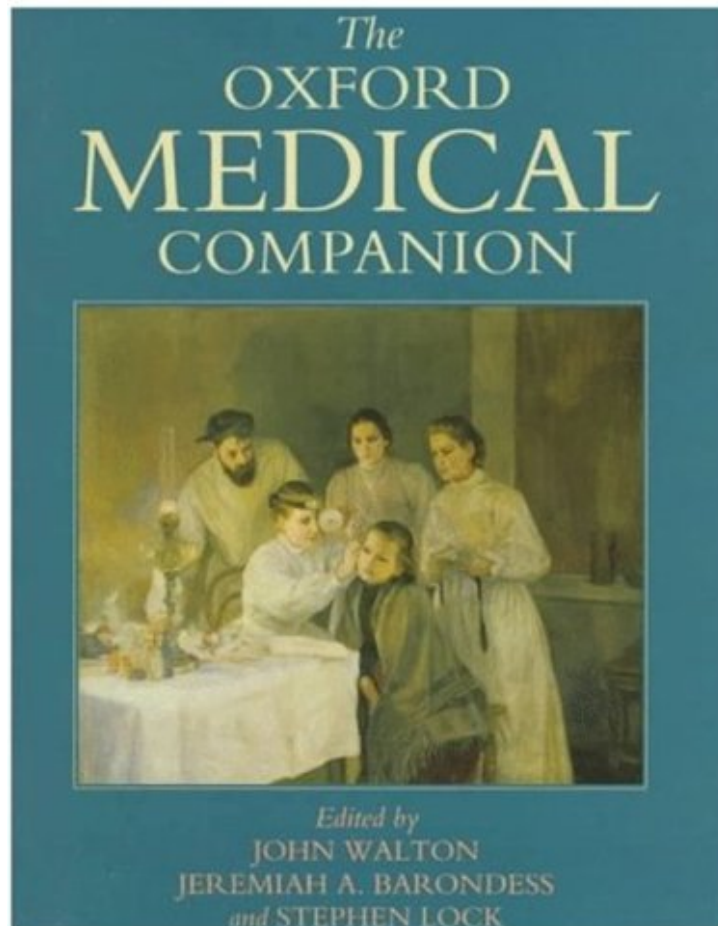


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## The Oxford Medical Companion

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**From Oxford University Press : The Oxford Medical Companion** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Oxford Medical Companion:

When John Walton published The Oxford Companion to Medicine, reviewers were ecstatic. "I had a wonderful time reading these two volumes," wrote Eric Cassell in The New England Journal of Medicine, "but I must confess that it was difficult to get other work done....[It] should be enjoyed not only as a useful reference but also as a mine of information about the present, the past, and by extrapolation, the future." Given the tremendous response, Walton and two distinguished co-editors began to thoroughly revise and edit this massive work to produce an accessible, convenient, up-to-date resource--The Oxford Medical Companion, an invaluable reference for doctors, students, and medical professionals of all kinds, as well as the general reader fascinated by the healing arts. The Oxford Medical

Companion represents an unequalled achievement among medical resources: here, in one volume, is a comprehensive account of the state of the physician's art, presented in hundreds of alphabetically arranged articles. In fact, no matter what your training and background, you'll find much to learn from this magnificent work. Here are articles summarizing the past and present of entire specialties of medicine--psychiatry, for example, or neurology, or anesthesiology--along with concise definitions of medical terms, capsule biographies of key figures, and entries on illnesses, medical education and training, the structure of the profession, and other related topics. This new Companion is tremendously far-reaching in scope, ranging from accounts of medical systems around the globe to essays on social issues and the close links between medicine and the arts, including painting, music, and literature. Most important, this book provides the definitive reference on the latest advances, such as the rapidly expanding field of molecular medicine and the most recent research into genetics. Indeed, this volume allows specialists and students, as well as the lay person, to probe the farthest reaches of the medical field. Along the way, the contributors paint a rich portrait of the long history of medicine, from the writings of the ancient physician Galen to the depiction of illnesses and doctoring in Shakespeare's plays. Unlike other books of medicine, The Oxford Medical Companion is neither a weighty, inaccessible tome nor a popularized account of little interest to professionals. Instead, here is a refreshing departure--a rich, intelligent guide to the state of medical science, written by the world's leading authorities, that will appeal to the broadest audience

From Library Journal This completely reworked edition of the two-volume *The Oxford Companion to Medicine* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 1986) is much shorter and is written for anyone with an interest in medicine, not just those working in medical fields. A cross between a dictionary and a single-volume encyclopedia, the book has an all-in-one quality that makes it appealing both as an excellent reference source and as a medical book that is fun to pick up and browse through. Of particular interest are articles about the field of medicine itself, including "Art and Medicine," "Communication Between Doctors and Patients," "Psychiatry," and articles about medicine in various geographical areas. The authors of the entries are primarily from the United Kingdom and are experts in their fields. The *Encyclopedia Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health* (Saunders, 1992) is similar but focuses is on serving students and practitioners, whereas *The Oxford Medical Companion* has a broader appeal. A welcome addition to any library. Eric D. Albright, Galter Health Sciences Lib., Northwestern Univ., Chicago Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Don't expect this medical companion to be a list of diseases and their treatments. It can best be described as a combination medical dictionary and encyclopedia covering the social as well as the clinical aspects of medicine. The first edition, published in 1986 as *The Oxford Companion to Medicine*, appeared in two volumes. This edition is in one, containing more than 8,000 alphabetically arranged entries. Entries range in length from one-sentence definitions of medical terms to 182 lengthy articles on broad medical and medically related topics. Articles appear on such subjects as Doctors in Literature, Art and Medicine (accompanied by a chart of congenital malformations and genetic disorders depicted in paintings), Medical Education, Medicine and Stamp Collecting, Aerospace Medicine, and Patients, Notable. These articles are signed and include bibliographies of medical literature. There are also overviews of areas of medical specialty, such as Ophthalmology and Neurology. These summary articles describe the field, trace its history and development, and give a synopsis of the types of conditions the specialist treats. Several articles describe the practice of medicine in the U.S., Europe, Canada, Africa, and Southeast Asia. Line drawings and charts accompany some entries. Nobel prizes for physiology and medicine are given in a useful chart. Appendixes list medical and professional abbreviations. The British origin of the book is evident in the list of contributors, the British spelling of words, and the focus on British medicine and medical practice. This focus is balanced somewhat by comparisons with the U.S. in many of the articles. The long articles are readable and easily understood by the layperson, but the definitions of medical terms use clinical language that demands specialized knowledge. For example, the definition of Bowman's capsule reads "the glomerular capsule comprising a dilatation of each renal tubule at its commencement surrounding the glomerulus." Definitions are cross-referenced using see and see also. Asterisks before a word indicate internal cross-references. This placement of the asterisk can be disconcerting to the reader's eye, especially in a five-line definition with five asterisks. There is much that is of interest here for the browsing reader, students, and medical practitioners, but this work in no way should be viewed as a replacement for standard medical dictionaries and encyclopedias. "Lord Walton and his colleagues should be congratulated on amassing this panoramic view of the bewildering mixture of empirical art and genuine science that underlies the world of modern medicine. Like all good Companions it offers both hours of pleasurable browsing and a valuable work of reference. Doctors will find that it sits as easily on their bedside table as in their clinics and surgeries, and non-medical readers who wish to learn more of how medicine has evolved over the years, and about those who make it happen, will find that it provides an excellent, non-technical introduction to this fascinating story." Professor Sir David Weatherall, FRS the book has an all-in-one quality that makes it appealing both as an excellent reference source and as a medical book that is fun to pick up and browse through. A welcome addition to any library. Library Journal Jan '95 Lord Walton and his colleagues should be congratulated on amassing this panoramic view of the bewildering mixture of empirical art and genuine science that underlies the world of modern

medicine. Like all good Companions it offers both hours of pleasurable browsing and a valuable work of reference. Doctors will find that it sits as easily on their bedside table as in their clinics and surgeries, and non-medical readers who wish to learn more of how medicine has evolved over the years, and about those who make it happen, will find that it provides an excellent, non-technical introduction to this fascinating story. 'Professor Sir David Weatherall, FRS' The book should prove educational and entertaining to all health professionals as well as to lay people ... Crammed full of fascinating tidbits of information on a hugely broad range of topics while containing trustworthy and comprehensive reviews. 'Jocelyn Brookes, The Lancet' My shelves are dangerously crammed with books on how to stay brimming with health and energy ... Few, if I were not a health writer, would find a permanent home. One exception is the recently published and encyclopaedic Oxford Medical Companion. 'Daily Telegraph' most Oxford Companions are a collection of alphabetically arranged items, they are not a dictionary, an encyclopaedia, or a textbook ... A companion has personality: it is fun as well as informative, it can be more quirky than a dictionary, more arbitrary than an encyclopaedia. 'Times Higher Education' a comprehensive reference book covering the knowledge base and practice of medicine for both health professionals and laymen ... The reader is presented with a wealth of readily accessible information; the topics listed are widely diverse from the many fields of medicine. This is a fascinating book which contains a wealth of information. It will be of interest to all those involved in medicine whether as providers of care or as a patient. 'J.A. Langton, British Journal of Anaesthesia' I cannot recommend too highly ... Arranged alphabetically, ending with "zygote", it is literate, readable and companionable. 'Victoria Glendinning, Daily Telegraph' a combination medical dictionary and encyclopedia covering the social as well as the clinical aspects of medicine ... There is much that is of interest here for the browsing reader, students, and medical practitioners. 'Booklist, February 1995' a one-volume edition of 1,038 pages that should continue to serve as a most useful reference guide to all aspects of the very broad field that we call medicine ... useful compilation. It is, obviously, difficult to confine 'medicine' between two covers, but the editors of this engaging volume have probably come as close to accomplishing the feat as we are likely to see. 'Nature Medicine, Vol 1, No 3, March 1995