



## Controversies in Cardiology

By John A. Ambrose and Alfredo E. Rodríguez (Editors)  
Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. Year 2015. 417 pages.  
ISBN 978-3-319-20414-7

*It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it.*

**JOSEPH JOUBERT** (1754-1824)

This book features truly unique qualities, rarely observed in medical texts. The editors have identified a number of controversial topics that are still debatable because they are recent or have not reached consensus based on current guidelines of everyday use. Its format does not follow the usual “for and against” argument, but a uniform structure for all the chapters, consisting in an introduction to the topic, a comprehensive analysis of all available evidence, and final conclusions proposed by the authors of each chapter based on their opinion and personal experience. This innovative format constitutes an attractive incentive for the reader who is interested in learning about the advances in cardiovascular science.

For this purpose, 52 authors from 9 countries have been summoned, most of them experts and opinion leaders in their areas of expertise. The informed cardiologists are certainly very used to reading their surnames in works repeatedly cited in widespread journals and books.

Modern medical practice is largely based on guidelines and standards developed by academic institutions and their expert groups. These instruments suggest guidelines to systematize medical decisions, but there are also argumentative issues left aside that trigger debates and controversies as those proposed in *Controversies in Cardiology*. Science is primarily controversial. Scientific advances originally arise from controversies, which are the starting point of hypotheses resulting in the creation of knowledge through experimental methods. But the main and final goal of medical science is patient welfare, and controversies are not exactly what patients prioritize. What patients need is the solution or relief of their ailments. In the near future, it is probable that the issues discussed in this book will no longer

be controversies but truths, but new controversial horizons will unquestionably arise to be debated.

The book is divided into three parts: the first one comprises 6 chapters dealing with special situations on controversial aspects regarding the evaluation of cardiovascular risk. The second part includes 3 chapters about dilemmas in cardiovascular diagnosis. Finally, the extensive third part, including 18 chapters, focuses on several aspects of management and treatment of different heart diseases, with emphasis on ischemic heart disease.

The content of the book covers topics of interest to clinical cardiologists or any other professional involved in the care of cardiovascular patients. Some of them include the difficulty of detecting *vulnerable atherosclerotic plaques* using technologies applicable in the community, or the more practical strategy for identifying the *vulnerable patient*, the role of coronary artery CT scan images versus functional tests in patients with precordial pain, the accurate interpretation of increased troponin in the emergency unit, the thrombosis / bleeding equation in patients under double or triple antithrombotic therapy, the mysterious takotsubo cardiomyopathy, the precise indication for atrial fibrillation ablation or percutaneous aortic valve prosthesis implantation, or management of heart diseases in the elderly, as well as several others. In line with the Interventional Cardiology specialization held by the editors of *Controversies in Cardiology*, some chapters deal with practical and technical aspects of that subspecialty.

There is no need to evaluate the editors, Dr. John A. Ambrose and Dr. Alfredo E. Rodríguez, since their extensive and fruitful scientific, academic and health-care oriented production define them through their numerous publications -some of them including innovative contributions to modern cardiology practice. The printing and publishing are flawless, as expected of a product from an editorial that is world leader in scientific texts.

Jorge Lerman <sup>MTSAC</sup>