

addition to the library of any clinician who has an interest in diving medicine and diving-related disorders.

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AccessMedicine.com (<http://books.mcgraw-hill.com/accessmedicine>)

AccessMedicine.com (<http://books.mcgraw-hill.com/accessmedicine>) is a Web site that, for a price, provides a great deal of reference material and other useful services. It was developed by publisher McGraw-Hill and seeks to be a nearly comprehensive reference of textbook-like information.

The site's greatest focus is on internal medicine. Subscribers have access to (1) *Harrison's Online*, a version of the venerated *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, a general medicine text, (2) *Hurst's The Heart*, one of several respected cardiovascular medicine texts, (3) *The Metabolic and Molecular Bases of Inherited Disease*, (4) *AccessLANGE*, the online version of a collection of Lange handbooks of medical basic science (eg, biochemistry, physiology) and clinical (eg, pediatrics, urology) topics taught to physicians in training, (4) *Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment*, a topic-arranged collection of chapters that cut across all medical disciplines (eg, breast, ear-nose-throat, poisoning, medical genetics), (5) *Harrison's On Hand*, an internal medicine text formatted for download to a handheld computer such as a Palm, and (6)

Clinical Pharmacology, a drug reference similar to Micromedex.

There are 2 search engines on **AccessMedicine.com**. The search engine for *Clinical Pharmacology* allows you to type the name of a drug (generic or proprietary), but you have to spell it correctly and completely or it will yield no result. The drug search function is useful; it provides a comprehensive list of dosages, forms, and photographs of the drug's appearance. For a drug that I checked there were recently updated entries for adjustment for renal insufficiency. In addition to how to dose for FDA-approved and unapproved indications and clinical pharmacology information, there is also approximate price information. These entries are written and revised by pharmacists, they seem accurate and up to date, and they are very easy to access.

The second search engine allows the user to search the entire site ("Search AccessMedicine") or to search individually any of the first 4 reference works listed above. The search is prompt and gives direct links to the topic. Searching topics this way provides a wide choice of answers—the more detailed physiologic explanations of *Harrison's* and the practical, abbreviated information of the Lange series handbooks. However, if you seek detailed explanations and "how to" advice rather than short summaries, I've found *UpToDate* (another online, subscription-based, clinical information resource) to be more easily understood than the latter material.

AccessMedicine.com is not cheap. The price for 1 year of *Harrison's Online* for an individual user is \$125. The annual price for the Lange *Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment* clinical handbook series is \$150. A comprehensive subscription to the entire **AccessMedicine.com** package is

\$19,000 for up to 5 users and available to institutions only. In comparison, the cost for a year of *UpToDate* for a single subscriber is \$495, with a renewal cost of \$395. A stand-alone workstation annual subscription for *UpToDate* costs \$1,495 (plus shipping!). A license for a site is not quoted online—you must call, probably best done sitting down.

As one who finds reading extensive material easier in print rather than in online form, I found **AccessMedicine.com** to be easy to navigate and prompt to provide answers. If you misspell a complicated drug name, you're in trouble: typing two-thirds of it won't get you anywhere. The presentation is easy to figure out and read, although some "chapters" (they are quite abbreviated) are truncated mid-page and require you to page down, which entails delay while a new page is loaded. I will not subscribe, because I can find the information for the features most valuable to me (*Harrison's Online* and *Clinical Pharmacology*) in other ways. *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine* or the *Cecil-Loeb Textbook of Medicine* can be found in most medical libraries, even small ones, and this basic material doesn't change very often. I can find information on any drug product (albeit not the cost) by trying to spell it at Google.com or on my hospital's paid-for Micromedex site. However, organizations seeking a good general on-line reference who don't want to purchase the book could consider *Harrison's Online* (<http://harrison-s.accessmedicine.com>).

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