

Preface

Critical Illness in Pregnancy



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A critically ill pregnant woman poses major challenges to physicians, as management involves the care of two lives. The pregnant woman is also in the prime of her life, and any morbidity or mortality is devastating to the young family. The serious illnesses that complicate pregnancy may be unique to pregnancy, but other medical conditions that affect non pregnant women also may complicate pregnancy.

In this issue of the *Critical Care Clinics*, we have invited experts to review the different illnesses complicating pregnancy. Starting with a review of the problems that physicians face around the world, this issue also addresses asthma, pulmonary embolism, adult respiratory distress syndrome, acute lung injury, hypertension, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and somatic support, airway management, and sepsis. Conditions that are unique to pregnancy, such as amniotic fluid embolism, HELLP (hemolysis, elevated liver enzyme levels, low platelet count) syndrome, and postpartum cardiomyopathy, also are reviewed.

We hope that this information is useful to intensivists and obstetric practitioners.

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