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[Review of] The American Medical Association Encyclopedia of Medicine

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This wide-ranging, up-to-date dictionary describes diseases, conditions, symptoms, medications, tests, procedures, and surgical operations for the layperson. Its authority, broad coverage, and excellent diagnostic charts distinguish it from similar works, although the AMA Family Medical Guide (LJ 11/15/82) provides more diagnostic information but less detailed description. Although it attempts to be layperson-oriented, it often fails; e.g., there are no cross-references from upper and lower gastrointestinal to "barium X-ray examinations," and many terms in its short entries must be looked up elsewhere in the book. A short list of self-help organizations (with phone numbers and addresses) emphasizes the limited usefulness of any work of this type. Nonetheless, for quick explanations, this book is among the best.—Robert Aken, Univ. of Kentucky Libs., Lexington