This issue of *The Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* is dedicated to lameness in the small animal patient. The diagnosis of orthopedic problems is often straightforward, but when the problem is not obvious, the cases can be among the most challenging and frustrating clinical problems. The clinician therefore needs to rely on a systematic examination, an awareness of the differentials, and a solid grasp of the available diagnostic tests as well as their indications. It is our hope that this issue will provide that information thereby enabling the clinician to deal more effectively with cases of lameness.

The first article details a thorough physical evaluation of the musculoskeletal system, the foundation of managing a lame patient. Subsequent articles explore specific aspects of lameness (e.g., pathophysiology, presentation in cats), and review the differentials for lameness in the forelimbs and hindlimbs of immature and adult animals. Finally, we review various diagnostic procedures to familiarize veterinarians with their use and appropriateness.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of this issue's contributing authors. Their contribution in sharing their expertise and experience was invaluable. We also express our appreciation to W.B. Saunders Company for inviting us to present this information to our colleagues and friends in the veterinary profession.

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