Preface

The term 'algorithm' is derived from the name of the ninth century Arabic mathematician *Algawrismi*, who also gave his name to 'algebra'. His 'algorismus' indicated a step-by-step logical approach to mathematical problem solving. In reading the final product, written by some of the finest pediatric hematologist-oncologists in the world and edited by my friend Dr Richard Sills, it is obvious that the spirit of the algorismus has been utilized to its best.

Practical Algorithms in Pediatric Hematology and Oncology is intended as a pragmatic text for use at the patient's bedside. The experienced practitioner applies step-by-step logical problem solving for each patient individually. Decision trees prepared in advance have the disadvantage of unacquaintedness with the individual patient. Yet, for the physician who is less experienced with a given problem, a prepared algorithm would provide a logical, concise, and cost-effective approach prepared by a specialist who is experienced with the given problem. In the process of writing this book, I served as the lay non-specialist

reader. Twenty-five years after completing my pediatric residency, I discover that Pediatric Hematology-Oncology has become a sophisticated specialty with solid scientific background of which I know so little. I would still refer my patients to a specialist with many of the diagnoses, symptoms and signs discussed here. But, with the help of this outstanding book, I would refer them after an educated initial workup, and would be better equipped to follow the specialist's management.

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