
This book represents volume 4 of a series called Pharmacology and the Skin. The current volume is a collection of 60 communications comprising the Proceedings of the 9th CIRD GALDERMA Symposium held in Cannes, France, October 4–6, 1990. The goal of this symposium was to discuss new paradigms for the pathogenesis of contact and atopic dermatitis, and their implications for treatment of these disease conditions. The book is divided into four sections.

The first section addresses Immune Functions of Epidermal and Dermal Cells. This section is highlighted by George Stingl's review on the immune function of the various skin cells, and the cellular and molecular pathways that may be operative in immune responses originating in the skin. Thomas Kupper provides a comprehensive review on the role of epidermal cytokines in cutaneous immune and inflammatory reactions. The novel concept that mast cells can modulate endothelial-leukocyte adhesion molecule expression in cutaneous inflammation was discussed by Robert Lavker. Interspersed between these reviews are a number of short research papers on the immunobiology of various skin cells, particularly the Langerhans cells.

The second section of the book focuses on the Pathogenesis and Pharmacology of allergic Contact Dermatitis. An excellent review is provided by Paul Bergstresser on some of the cellular and immunologic mechanisms involved in the sensitization and elicitation of inflammation in contact eczema. He completes this review by identifying specific events in this process that may be amendable to pharmacologic manipulation. The remainder of this section consist of research papers ranging from reports of new in vitro and in vivo models for contact dermatitis to the measurements of neuropeptides, cytokines, and adhesion molecule expression in elicited contact reactions.

The third section of the book deals with the Pathogenesis and Pharmacology of Atopic Dermatitis. Kevin Cooper provides a comprehensive review of potential mechanisms that result in the skin inflammation associated with atopic dermatitis (AD). The immunologic papers in this section focus on a potential role for CD36+ Langerhans cells as antigen-presenting cells in AD skin as well as the potential importance of TH2 cells in the pathogenesis of humoral and cellular abnormalities found in AD. Other papers in this section also describe abnormalities in essential fatty acid and vasoactive intestinal polypeptide levels in AD skin as well as the potential role of food, inhalant, and microbial allergens in the triggering of this skin disease.

The final section of the book addresses Current and Future Therapies of Allergic and Atopic Dermatitis. Thomas Bieber began this section by discussing recent advances in the management of AD, particularly the therapeutic implications of newly described immunologic findings. There was considerable interest in the use of phototherapy as well as immunomodulators (cyclosporin, interferon-gamma, and interferon-alpha) in the treatment of AD. Phototherapy also appears to be quite effective in the treatment of chronic allergic contact dermatitis. Several research studies used animal models to demonstrate that modification of the hapten or antigen-presenting cell involved in the induction of contact sensitivity reactions could result in a state of nonresponsiveness (tolerance) to the original hapten. These studies suggest new directions for the treatment of allergic contact and atopic dermatitis.

The strength of this book is that the participants in this symposium include many of the leading laboratory investigators who have contributed to the recent explosion in our knowledge concerning the immune response to the skin as well as clinical investigators who have been involved in the development of new treatments for these two common inflammatory skin diseases. Thus, the reader is provided with a collation of articles that accurately reflect the current status of research in this field. However, aside from the overviews provided in each section, the research papers are unlikely to be of great interest to the clinician and is thus primarily recommended to individuals interested in cutaneous biology and their implications for future directions in the therapy of these diseases.

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The appeal of Clues is that it presents 100 vignettes describing observations that are of practical use in the daily interpretation of skin biopsy specimens. In general, the clues are of two types. The first type of clue is that the observer to an unsuspected diagnosis, such as "spaces of various sizes and shapes within a cornified layer on the palm or sole are a clue to tinea nigra." The second type of clue is that one is that used in the differential diagnosis between two conditions. For example, "in the differentiation of an apocrine from an eccrine mixed tumor, elongated tubules are a clue to apocrine nature." The clues vary from common observations that are recognized by most dermatopathologists to more subtle observations that will be of interest to the most sophisticated diagnosticians.

As expected from books published by Dr. Ackerman and colleagues, this monograph is organized in a very logical and methodical manner. For each of the numbered 100 clues, the first page is a photomicrograph that challenges the reader to identify the clue and make the diagnosis. The second page illustrates the clue at different magnifications and clearly states in one sentence the clue and its significance. The third page for each clue is a brief text that describes the clue in more detail, discusses other differential features of the condition, and comments on the relative reliability of the clue. The fourth and final page includes clinical photographs, demonstrates conditions to be considered in the differential diagnosis, or discusses subtle variations in the clue. For most clues, one to three references are included.

The 100 clues are presented in an organized manner beginning with the stratum corneum for clue 1 and ending with a description.
of clues involving the subcutaneous fat. A glossary of terms and a brief index are also included.

This book is easy reading and can be completed in a few hours. I would recommend reading it in its entirety or in sections (epidermis, dermis, subcutaneous fat) rather than using it as a reference volume. After all, if one does not recognize the clue, it is unlikely that the reference value of the book will be utilized.

Overall, the book is well written and well illustrated. The clues appeal to the detective in each of us and challenge us to solve the mysteries of dermatopathology.

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Cutaneous Adnexal Tumors: A Guide to Pathologic Diagnosis is described in the preface as a "brief compendium" that is intended as a diagnostic tool for pathologists. The book is written by two outstanding pathologists and is published by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Press. Because the two other major monographs on adnexal tumors are written by dermatopathologists with dermatology backgrounds, this book offers a different perspective of adnexal tumors.

The book is organized into five chapters: sweat gland tumors, sebaceous gland tumors, hair follicle tumors, Merkel cell carcinoma, and a chapter on differential diagnosis of cutaneous adnexal tumors. The microscopic photographs with the exception of the electron photomicrographs are all in color and are grouped at the end of each chapter. Although this format reduces the cost of producing color photographs, it inherently makes correlation of the text with the photographs an inconvenient process. The quality of the microscopic photographs are outstanding in terms of selection and technical quality. Most photographs have been taken or cropped into a square format. One or two clinical photographs of most adnexal tumors are also included at the end of each chapter.

In addition to the beautiful design and illustrations, the text is superbly written in a concise fashion and the approach to the diagnosis of adnexal tumors is pragmatic. The authors occasionally interject their personal perspective on individual tumors based on their extensive experience. Most interesting was the authors continued correlation of breast tumors with corresponding apocrine sweat gland tumors, a point of view not typically found in books written by dermatologists. The strong suit of this book is the informative discussion of immunoperoxidase techniques for the diagnosis of adnexal tumors. These are sometimes presented in algorithms that I found to be excellent in their organization. Although one might argue the inclusion of Merkel cell carcinoma in a book on adnexal neoplasms, the discussion and diagnosis of Merkel cell carcinoma was so comprehensive and outstanding that it markedly added to the value of this book.

Although the book is meant to be a "brief compendium" and not comprehensive in its scope, I was disappointed that brief sections on normal embryology and anatomy were not included. Because adnexal tumors are outgrowths of cells that are caricatures of normal anatomic structures, it was disappointing that no effort was made to correlate the two, a concept that I find useful for the teaching and diagnosis of adnexal tumors. I was also disappointed that the discussions of some adnexal tumors were incomplete. For example, in the section on syringomas, the authors failed to record the association of clear cell syringomas with diabetes mellitus and neglected to mention histologic variants such as syringomas that demonstrate superficial foci of keratinization reminiscent of milia. Although the book is intended for pathologists, the discussion of treatment options are often limited or incomplete from a dermatologist's standpoint.

In summary, this is an outstanding book on adnexal tumors that is well-written and beautifully illustrated. It reaches its intended audience of pathologists but its audience should include dermatologists as well. Practicing dermatologists and dermatology residents will appreciate the superb color photomicrographs and dermatopathologists will demonstrate the excellent algorithmic approach to the immunoperoxidase diagnosis of adnexal tumors and small round cell cutaneous tumors.

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