

**Neoplasms With Eccrine Differentiation: Ackerman's Histologic Diagnosis of Neoplastic Skin Diseases—A Method of Pattern Analysis.** By Pascual Abenoya and A. Bernard Ackerman. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, 1990 (536 pp, \$120.00).

*Neoplasms with Eccrine Differentiation* is the first in a series of monographs on "Histologic Diagnosis of Neoplastic Skin Diseases: A Method by Pattern Analysis." It is the most thorough and well-written monograph on eccrine neoplasms to date and I highly recommend it for residents, dermatologists, pathologists, and dermatopathologists.

The book is beautifully designed and illustrated. I particularly enjoyed the two chapters on embryology and histology of normal eccrine glands and ducts. For example, the normal histology of the acrosyringium and the ampulla of the eccrine unit (junction of gland and duct) are very well illustrated. In chapter 4 the authors discuss the least common denominators for adnexal tumors; vacuolated cells for sebaceous differentiation, decapitation secretion for apocrine differentiation, and hair bulbs and papillae for follicular differentiation. Unfortunately, a single least common denominator does not exist for eccrine differentiation, requiring us to rely on other histologic criteria.

Each chapter on specific neoplasms begins with a historical perspective that gives insight into the evolving classification of these tumors and helps clarify the confusing terminology. A strength of this monograph is the use of clinical information about specific tumors based on the large volume of cases in the senior author's practice, including 530 syringomas and 353 poromas. Each chapter contains a bar graph with the age distribution and clinical description based on these cases and a literature review. Each chapter is well-referenced and the controversies surrounding many of the tumors are discussed in a thoughtful and objective manner. For

example, information favoring eccrine or apocrine differentiation for cylindromas is presented in a tabular fashion and then discussed. When the differentiation of a specific sweat gland tumor is uncertain, the authors include it for completeness. The literature review points out observations that may not be widely recognized, such as the association of clear-cell syringomas with diabetes mellitus.

Sections in each chapter cover histopathologic findings, histogenesis, and biologic considerations. The latter is particularly useful in the several chapters dealing with eccrine malignancies. The histopathologic descriptions are complete. For example, the description of apocrine mixed tumors refers to the follicular and sebaceous differentiation that occasionally occurs.

Unfortunately, although pattern analysis is useful in helping to determine the malignant biologic potential of eccrine neoplasms, the authors have not presented evidence that it will be as useful in making a specific diagnosis as it is for inflammatory skin diseases. The monograph contains more illustrations than are needed to make specific points. The chapter on syringomas shows three to six photomicrographs of each of 18 syringomas, which is redundant. On the other hand, the chapters on cylindrocarcinomas, spiradenocarcinoma and hidradenocarcinomas have no photomicrographs due to the rarity of these tumors. The monograph finishes with a very complete 34-page glossary of terms.

In summary, this book contains much useful, practical, and well-referenced information. It contains original data from a large dermatopathology practice. The material is presented in a consistent format with good illustrations. I recommend this monograph and look forward to others in the series.

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