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The major aim of the International Workshop on Ergot Alkaloids, which was held in Rome in December 1976 under the sponsorship of the Italian Brain Research Foundation, was to provide an integrated overview of the current knowledge of the basic and clinical aspects of classic and new ergot derivatives.

The topics have been selected to encompass all aspects related to an understanding of the regulation and control of brain functions by this class of drugs.

This volume is intended to survey the large number of significant experimental and clinical data dealing with ergot drugs which were reported at the Rome meeting. In particular, the contributors to this book have drawn on the salient literature, as well as on their own work, with the aim of clarifying the different modes of action of ergot derivatives and the various possible utilization in abnormal clinical conditions, depending on brain disfunctions.
The combined efforts of research workers in different areas of neurochemistry and of experimental therapeutics offer good hope for a better understanding on the mechanism of action of these compounds and consequently new opportunities for successful treatment of a variety of disorders.

The Editors
P.F. Spano and M. Trabucchi