Further Section

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Book Reviews

J.M. Elwood Melanoma and Naevi: Incidence, Interrelationships and Implications
Pigment Cell, vol. 9
Karger, Basel 1988
VIII + 156 pp.; SFr. 125.-/DM 150.-/US$ 83.50
ISBN 3-8055-4639-4

The incidence of malignant melanoma is rapidly increasing in all countries with predominantly white populations. Epidemiological studies assessing risk factors for melanoma showed strong relationships to both environmental factors (e.g. exposure to sunlight) and to host factors related to pigmentation. The latter include, in particular, the prevalence of benign naevi on the body. Therefore, the relationship between melanoma and naevi has become of crucial importance in the aetiology, pathogenesis, prevention and control of cutaneous malignant melanoma. This book comprises eleven fascinating and informative chapters on topics such as the rising incidence of melanoma and the occurrence of benign naevi in the general population; clinical, pathological and genetic aspects of the relationship between naevi and melanoma; the identification of individuals at risk; the observation of earliest symptoms and signs of melanoma; the description of programmes of prevention and early diagnosis in high and moderate risk areas. This excellent book is not only a must for dermatologists and specialised surgeons, but is also very valuable for melanoma researchers.

A. Eberle, Basel


Nuclear Hormone Receptors presents an excellent collection of papers written by 43 international experts on the family of receptors for steroid and thyroid hormones as well as for various other ligands, such as retinoic acid. It has become clear in the past few years that the malfunction of these hormone receptors is implicated in oncogenesis and a number of endocrine disorders. Therefore, a concise presentation of the current knowledge in this field is very welcome, particular when restricted to one single volume. The book contains 16 chapters of which the first 4 provide excellent overviews on the whole receptor family (by E.V. Jensen), the oestrogen receptor (by S. Green and P. Chambon), the glucocorticoid receptor (by M. Danielsen), and the thyroid hormone receptors (by W.W. Chin). The second part of the book (chapters 5-10) is devoted to molecular aspects, namely the role of steroid hormone receptors in gene expression (by S.Y. Tsai, M.-J. Tsai and B.W. O’Malley), the characterization of hormone response elements (by E. Martinez and W. Wah), the cooperative transactivation of steroid receptors (by Muller et al.), the repression of gene expression by steroid and thyroid hormones (by I.E. Akerblom and P.L. Mellon), the characterization of DNA-receptor interactions (by M. Beato et al.), and the interaction of steroid receptors with chromatin (by G.L. Hager and T.K. Archer).
The third part (chapters 11 and 12) deals with the ontogeny of sex steroid receptors in mammals (by G.R. Cunha et al.) and the retinoic acid receptors and vertebrate limb morphogenesis (by C.W. Ragsdale and J.P. Brockes). The fourth part (chapters 13-15) collects three excellent papers on pathophysiological implications of receptor disorders: the role of steroid hormones and growth factors in the control of normal and malignant breast (by R. Clarke, R.B. Dickson and M.E. Lippmann), genetic defects of receptors involved in disease (by M.R. Hughes and B.W. O’Malley), and avian erythroleukaemia as a model for the study of ∂-erbA oncogene function (by H. Beug and B. Vennström). The book concludes with a summary by the editor. This list of topics illustrates the wide range of information provided in this book. The editor, M.G. Parker, has not only collected 16 excellent, nicely illustrated and well-written contributions but he also managed to have them published in a short period of time so that the reference lists are still up-to-date. This book is very valuable to the specialists in the field as well as to molecular and clinical endocrinologists, cell biologists and oncologists.

A. Eberle, Basel
Zen Itoh (ed) Motilin
Motilin is one of the brain-gut peptides with localization in gastrointestinal endocrine cells and central neurons. The physiological significance of gut motilin is not yet established, although a role in the regulation of motility has been suggested. Nothing is known about the role of motilin in the pineal body and pituitary gland. The present work is an attempt to describe the present knowledge on various aspects of motilin research. It is a multiauthor book written by well-recognized experts in the field of motilin research. The book is arranged in 17 chapters covering the chemical structure, biochemistry and physiology of motilin, the suspected clinical disorders associated with motilin and potential therapeutic applications of the peptide. The depth of details varies from chapter to chapter, making it unclear exactly what audience the book was written for. For someone conducting research in the area of motilin, the coverage is too superficial and the references outdated for a book published in 1990: the reference sections have only a handful of references from 1988, but do not include references after 1988. For a clinician, the book contains a lot of basic research. The book probably serves best as an introduction to motilin, its relationship to interdigestive gastrointestinal motility, and thus to the understanding of integrative control of gut function.

Ch. Beglinger, Basel