Preface

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This supplement contains the contributions presented by international speakers at a symposium on 'The Role of Somatostatin and Octreotide in Pancreatic Disease', organized as a satellite to the XXIV European Pancreatic Club Meeting in Ulm, FRG, in October 1992.

Since the discovery of somatostatin by Guillemin in 1972, substantial progress has been achieved with regard to the role and the clinical application of this hormone. Meanwhile, octreotide, a somatostatin analog with a much longer half-life in comparison with the original hormone, has been synthesized and has become a clinically useful drug in pancreatic disease.

Both somatostatin and octreotide are potent inhibitors of exocrine pancreatic secretion as well as inhibitors of most gastrointestinal hormones. This is the reason why both drugs are meanwhile established to treat gastroentero-pancreatic (GEP) endocrine tumors, pancreatic fistulas and to prevent postoperative complications in major pancreatic surgery.

However, with regard to somatostatin and octreotide treatment, a number of topics in pancreatology are still under discussion, e.g., the treatment of acute pancreatitis, pancreatic pseudocysts, pain in chronic pancreatitis, or even, and just recently mentioned, the treatment of pancreatic exocrine cancer. These controversial areas of particular interest have been included also in this volume to present the current state of knowledge.

We are grateful to all speakers and contributors for their valuable works and scientific input and hope that this publication will contribute to the information of those who are engaged in the treatment of pancreatic disease by somatostatin and its analogs and that it will stimulate further research, and especially, further well-designed clinical trials to resolve the still controversial areas.

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