Book Reviews

Jürgen Fuchs
Oxidative Injury in Dermatopathology
Springer, Heidelberg 1992
XII + 360 pp.; 122 fig.; 17 tables; DM 198.-
ISBN 3-540-54355-4

This book intends to be a comprehensive analysis of hundreds of publications dealing with free radicals and oxidative skin injury. The first chapters are a nice introduction to the biochemistry of oxidants and antioxidant systems. Links between free radicals and some basic mechanisms of pathophysiology are presented. These concern opinions and hypotheses derived from experimental works dealing with electromagnetic radiations and other physical injuries to the skin, microbial diseases, skin aging and inflammation.

In contrast to the preceding chapters, the part of the book considering dermatopathology and skin disease is poor, confusing and even misleading in some places. It simply represents speculations based on too many outdated, wrong or hypothetic concepts. For instance, nodular fasciitis is considered as a neutrophilic vasculitis, or herpes gestationis and bullous pemphigoid are classified in distinct categories of diseases according to the frequency of tissue eosinophilia. The next chapters dealing with dermatopharmacology and derma-toxicology go back to biochemistry, and data at that level appear sound. However, the literature is poorly covered when the author tries to make a link between basic free radical pharmacology and clinical effects of treatments.

In short, this book represents a tremendous effort of synthesis of the literature. It represents a valuable data basis when biochemistry and basic biology are concerned. Unfortunately, the attractive term ‘dermatopathology’ used in the title of the book is not supported by a valid scientific background. This book does not break down the scepticism that scientists and clinicians may have in considering the putative relationship between free radicals and a number of specific skin diseases. If ‘free radical’ biology is alive, ‘free radical dermatopathology’ is still in gestation.

G. Piérard, Liège

Kurt S. Stenn, A.G. Messenger
The Molecular and Structural Biology of Hair

The publication of the proceedings of the meeting on molecular and structural biology of hair constitutes a major event in the field of hair growth research. Indeed, in recent years there has been an upsurge of interest in unravelling the fundamental biologic processes leading to the development of cutaneous appendages and especially in the field of dynamics of human hair growth, which is a clinically highly relevant problem. As clinicians, we are daily asked by our patients to deliver more adequate answers to their questions as to the mechanisms of hair growth and hair loss.
These proceedings come in due time because they present detailed and updated basic information and integrate a more dynamic dimension in the field of hair biology. The structure and expression of hair keratins and interfilamentous proteins are dealt with in great detail. How is the hair-producing part of the hair follicle regulated in terms of proliferation and differentiation? The problem of metabolic processes going on in the dermal papilla (e.g. extracellular matrix, growth factors) and the intermediate metabolism of epithelial cells give partial answers to this question. What are the mechanisms controlling the reconstruction of the hair-producing unit after it entered into the telogen phase of the hair growth cycle? We know for sure that it is rebuilt after the specific contact between dermal papilla and a specialized group of epithelial cells: the follicular stem cells.

How is it that transformation of steroid hormones leads to the conversion of the strong terminal follicle into a hypotrophic vellus follicle on the scalp and vice versa in the beard region? Many questions have been answered, and many are still left open to future investigation. It is impossible to just mention the wide range of questions that have been raised and addressed in detail in all the papers that have been presented during this meeting dealing with basic biologic processes.

What is clear, as I see it, is that from now on the questions are put in a dynamic, interactive and clinically relevant perspective. Therefore we entered a period where the results of the active research going on in many laboratories will generate xenobiotics aimed at modulating hair growth. As this will, sooner or later, end up in the hands of the practitioner, the message is clear: ‘It is time to keep yourself informed about the most recent and exciting aspects of hair growth research.’ Therefore the publication of these proceedings is welcome.

An important aspect of this gathering of people involved in basic research is the interesting short communication section oriented towards applied research. Several discussions already during the basic science lectures as well as original papers reported on potential applications that were put in a more clinical perspective or that were using experimental systems with results clearly pointing to future applicability in the human system. Therefore this section may be of special importance to the clinician.

This book should easily find its way to the desk and bookshelf of everyone involved in the evaluation and understanding of hair growth regulation, hair loss and hair growth promotion. It is of special value to young scientists who are willing to become acquainted with existing information in this field of skin research.

D. Van Neste, Tournai

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T. Miyamoto, M. Okada (eds.)
Progress in Allergy and Clinical Immunology, vol. 2
Huber/Hogrefe, Bern 1992
IX+ 747 pp., 169 fig., 120 tables; SFr. 76.-, DM 79.-
ISBN 3^156-82194-8

Research in allergy and clinical immunology is a field of steady and fast-moving progress. This book presents 131 contributions, provided by high-level investigators, in 21 sections with reviews covering the major progress from basic immunology to recent concepts in clinical work. Each contribution is a clear and easy-to-read comprehensive summary of the subject, most of them accompanied by quite extensive references. House dust mite and mite allergy or occupational and environmental allergy are some of the hot spots included in this compilation. The better understanding of pathophysiological events as well as the design of new vaccines will
certainly gain from tools provided by the recombinant technology. These new approaches are well presented in the section dealing with the impact of biotechnology on allergy research. The dermatologist will also find some contributions fitting his field of interest in section XV on dermatoinmunology. These reviews focus on keratinocyte-derived cytokines, the role of allergy in atopic eczema, the immunology of mouse $\gamma/\delta$ dendritic epidermal cells and autoimmune bullous diseases of the skin. The reader will also be interested in several other contributions in the section of physical allergy, especially by statements on the pathophysiology and treatment of different forms of urticaria. Unfortunately, although there has also been much progress recently in elucidating mechanisms of allergic contact dermatitis, dermatologists will miss here a review on this topic. This may be due to the fact that this problem is hardly addressed by most of the societies for allergy and clinical immunology which mostly have their roots in internal medicine. Nevertheless, for all those interested in keeping up with new advances in the area of allergy and clinical immunology, whether they are practitioners or researchers, the proceedings of the 14th International Congress of Allergology and Clinical Immunology certainly represent the opportunity to quickly review the state of the art in this field.

Th. Bieber, Munich
G.K. Steigíeder
Atlas de dermatologie pratique
Masson, Paris 1992
XI + 284 pp.; 316 fig.; FF 158.00
ISBN 2-225-82751-6
This volume is the second edition of a book edited in 1984. It is characterized by the addition of new epidemiologic data concerning particularly HIV infection. The 331 colour illustrations are excellent although small in size. They are in close proximity to the appropriate section of text. The text is poor but clear with a good discussion on differential diagnosis.
This book summarizes the main cutaneous lesions encountered in daily medical practice. It is of interest to the majority of medical practitioners and also to medical students and dermatologists.
S. Belaich, Paris
Samuel L. Moschella, Harry J. Hurley
This new edition is expanded from 85 to 102 chapters with 100 new contributors. AIDS, viral infections and aspects of inflammation have been added. The volumes now also cover cutaneous medicine and dermatological surgery (216 pages). Old chapters have been updated with new references up to 1990. A good index in both volumes is helpful. The chapter on clinical diagnosis has for unknown reasons the same schematic pictures in both colour and black and white. In other chapters where colour could be needed the illustrations are only in black and white. Many of them are, however, of good quality and give a reminder of the old textbook by Pillsbury-Shelley-Kligman which has been used as a springboard for all editions. The standard of the chapters varies, but Drs. Moschella and Hurley are to be congratulated to have collected so many excellent contributors.
L. Juhlin, Uppsala
R.J.G. Rycroft, Torkil Menné, Peter J. Frosch, Claude Benezra (eds.)
Textbook of Contact Dermatitis
In 1980, Etain Cronin had written a wonderful book entitled modestly Contact Dermatitis. This was considered altogether encyclopaedic and very useful for the practitioner. Due to the huge amount of new knowledge and the increasing complexity of problems, a new book was urgently needed. The task seemed overwhelming, but the members of the European Environmental and Contact Dermatitis Research Group decided to cope with it, and the child is born! The new textbook is divided into 22 chapters covering all the facets of contact dermatitis. The chapters are of unequal length, some of them being separated into several sections.

It is noticeable that most textbooks or booklets devoted to contact dermatitis are almost exclusively focused on allergic reactions. On this occasion, the authors are not caught in the trap! If allergic contact dermatitis remains the central core in many chapters, other types of contact dermatitis are fully developed such as burns, cutaneous irritation, phototoxic and photoallergic reactions, hyperpigmentation or depigmentation.

The main interest lies in the fact that the various problems involved in contact dermatitis are considered: aetiology, pathogenesis, clinical variants, pathology and immunopathology, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, prevention and legislation in the different countries.

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The heterogeneity of such a multi-author book is remarkably avoided; this is due to the marvellous work of editorship performed by the main editor Richard Rycroft who has spent hundreds of hours in correcting, modifying and/or rewriting texts reaching his desk from various parts of Europe.

As a result of this, the text is a model of unity: it implies fundamental agreement of interdependent components, which in turn produces harmony of thought, purpose and style.

Two points deserve a special mention: 104 colour prints of excellent quality and 2,868 references covering major topics. All chemical formulas have been carefully verified by one of the co-editors, Claude Benezra (Head of the Laboratory of Dermatochemistry at Strasbourg University), who died in a tragic airbus accident in January 1992.

The book can be considered as the reference source of information for young physicians who intend to go deeply into the field of environmental dermatology (e.g. occupational dermatology, dermatocosmetology, photoallergy). It is also a useful companion for fully trained dermatologists; nevertheless, we must bear in mind that the book is not exhaustive, which is unavoidable in our expanding world of knowledge. When searching for skin side-effects of a chemical, it is possible that the question will remain unanswered. In this respect, the reader has to take over by consulting specialized periodicals such as Contact Dermatitis. This implicit remark does not lead to underestimate the quality of the textbook.

J.M. Lachapelle, Bruxelles

Marwali Harahap

Complications of Dermatologic Surgery
Prevention and Treatment

Whenever and whatever one may treat surgically, any surgical operation may be followed by complications. Although rather rare in dermatologic surgery, complications do occur and each
dermatologic surgeon must be aware of the potential risks and be capable of managing complications. Although complications are not a favorite subject, the editor has managed to attract contributors from Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, the UK and the USA. There are 17 chapters dealing with most aspects of contemporary dermatologic surgery. They usually briefly define and describe the operation and mention preventive measures, common and serious infrequent complications and provide recommendations as to their treatment.

The book starts with local and regional anesthesia and gives details about anesthetic agents, their particular risks, complications related to vasoconstrictors and drug interactions. The chapter on electrodesiccation not only discusses acute, subacute and late complications but also mentions rare events like cardiac arrest as well as fire and burning. In the chapter on dermabrasion, the importance of preoperative screening and postoperative care is stressed, complications and their treatment are detailed. The cryosurgery chapter gives a list of immediate and delayed complications and discusses contraindications. The common laser types are discussed with particular emphasis on carbon dioxide and argon lasers. Chemical peeling may cause a number of unwanted sequelae and this chapter describes general and specific complications of different peels. Complications of nail surgery and how to avoid and treat them are briefly described.

Collagen implantation is thoroughly discussed as is the treatment of telangiectasias. A lot of information is given about the potential complications of shave excisions, of fusiform excision with primary suture, and of Mohs’ surgery and wound infection is dealt with in detail; the editor recommends perioperative antibiotic prophylaxis for those patients in whom the risk of postoperative infection is great or wound infection would be grave, but he cautions against the use of antibiotics as a substitute for asepsis, atraumatic tissue handling, or correct hemostasis. Hair transplantation and alopecia reduction complications are thoroughly discussed by a leading pioneer of these techniques. The skin graft and flap chapters give valuable advice to young dermatologic surgeons. The book ends with complications of liposuction and skin expansion.

This book contains a wealth of information about which complications do occur, how to prevent and to treat them. It is an important book not only for the beginner in dermatologic surgery but also for the experienced surgeon who may not have had these complications and may have the false sense of security that complications will continue to happen next to his door. This is a book that belongs on the shelves of every dermatologist, except for those who never do any surgery.

E. Haneke, Wuppertal

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