Gut and Liver

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Preface

The liver and the gastrointestinal tract are closely related, sharing the location in the abdominal cavity, the blood supply and drainage and their metabolic and nutritive functions. Signal molecules from the gut are degraded or modified reaching the liver. Signals from the liver such as bile acids reach receptors in the gut and are of importance for the intestinal barrier. Liver and gut play a crucial role in maintaining homeostasis between the organism and the outside world, as represented by the gut flora with the help of the innate and the adaptive immune system.

Diseases of the gut may affect the liver and the biliary system. Diseases of the liver and in particular liver cirrhosis have a wide influence on the gut and its luminal contents leading to changes in the flora and the intestinal barrier, and in particular hemodynamics of the splanchnic circulation.

These proceedings reflect the lectures presented at the symposium ‘Gut and Liver’ in August 2010 in Beijing, China. Inflammatory bowel diseases and chronic liver diseases and their consequences were discussed during 2 days. Based on pathophysiological considerations diagnosis and treatment were covered in 8 sessions.

The editors hope this book will be a source of valuable information in particular to those who could not attend the symposium.

Jürgen Schölmerich
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