Lasers in Otorhinolaryngology,
and in Head and Neck Surgery

Editors: H. Rudert, J.A. Werner

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Medical laser techniques and technology develop very rapidly. Frequent updates are important to reflect the present state of the art. For this purpose, conferences on this subject have been held at the Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery of the University of Kiel since 1985, and will be continued in the future.

The first two meetings in 1985 and 1988 dealt almost exclusively with applications of the CO2 laser in otorhinolaryngology. During the third conference, in 1990, the use of the Nd:YAG laser was discussed, especially in the treatment of hemangiomas. This 4th Laser Congress presents an overview of six additional laser types already being used (for laser treatment of diseases of the middle and the inner ear, vascular malformations, diseases of the nasal cavity and the paranasal sinuses as well as benign and malignant tumors of the skin). Worldwide, transoral CO2 laser surgery for laryngeal and hypopharyngeal cancer is a highly controversial topic. Long-term results show that it is justified to give transoral laser therapy an established place in the treatment of carcinomas, equal to conventional surgical partial resection of laryngeal or hypopharyngeal cancer. However, one has to avoid uncritical application of the CO2 laser. It must satisfy the already complex criteria for conventional surgery of carcinomas.

Authors of the 4th Symposium of Lasers in Otorhinolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery, Kiel, have been invited not only from Germany but also from Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Switzerland, Sweden, Hungary and the USA. They all have extensive experience with particular laser systems. The organizers of this meeting are proud to say that without exception everyone who was invited to participate did. Papers other than the invited lectures have been accepted to illustrate the situation of laser therapy outside
the well-known centers.
The editors are delighted that almost all the speakers submitted their manuscripts for this book and for this we would like to thank them. The organizers would like to express their gratitude to the staff of Karger Publishers, Basel, for their spontaneous offer to publish all the lectures in the well-respected series Advances in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology in English, since there is presently no international up-to-date overview in which all the therapeutic applications of lasers in otorhinolaryngology, head and neck surgery are discussed.

Heinrich Rudert
Jochen A. Werner

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