Adequate HLA Matching in Keratoplasty
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Volume Editor R. Sundmacher, Düsseldorf

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The practical value of using HLA-matched grafts for corneal transplantation has been a matter of controversy from the beginning and the vast majority of corneal surgeons and directors of cornea banks still seem to believe that no proof exists that HLA matching may contribute significantly to transplant survival. Whereas in most clinical fields we can nowadays state that medical progress follows universal mainstream lines, this does not seem to be the case with HLA matching and corneal transplantation. A growing Central European group has worked out ways and rules how to achieve a significant contribution to long-term corneal transplant survival by HLA matching, while in other parts of the world, and also in the USA, these results seem to have been partly ignored or misjudged. On the occasion of the Meeting of the German Ophthalmological Society held in Berlin in September 2001, a group of ‘HLA promoters’ gathered to present and discuss their latest results. One of the main problems in understanding past developments in HLA lies in the fact that the literature is too diffuse, and therefore the information available to individual researchers is often inadequate. We thought it desirable to offer a compilation of some of the important aspects in this volume, to increase understanding and promote discussion. We hope this book will contribute to this aim, and extend the perception of HLA matching as a positive contributory factor in corneal transplants, provided it is properly understood and employed.

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