
Preface

Pituitary tumors represent a unique form of neoplasm. Both in concept and in practice, they differ fundamentally from virtually all other intracranial neoplasms. The most obvious difference relates to the dual nature of the clinical problem they pose, featuring endocrine concerns on the one hand, complicated by neurooncologic issues on the other. Thus, the diagnostic and therapeutic imperatives that surround pituitary tumors are correspondingly unique in calling upon the coordinated expertise of the clinical endocrinologist, neuroradiologist, neurosurgeon, pathologist, and radiation therapist. Indeed, the excellent long-term outcomes now enjoyed by many patients with pituitary tumors are directly attributable to this multidisciplinary approach and bears testament to the many innovations over the past two decades. These include new methods in endocrine diagnosis, high resolution imaging, receptor mediated pharmacotherapy, microsurgical technique, the development of a precise and physiologically meaningful classification of pituitary tumors, and improved methods of radiation delivery.

Whereas pituitary tumors are the subject of several current textbooks of endocrinology, neurosurgery, pathology, and radiology, their treatment in these contexts tends to represent a unidimensional view of the disease, one understandably skewed to a specialty-specific readership. This contrasts with the actual way in which pituitary tumors are clinically managed, an approach wherein optimal outcomes result from thoughtful, interactive decision-making by knowledgeable physicians of various disciplines. It is of this spirit of multidisciplinary cooperation that this text was born.

Our objective was to produce a comprehensive and up-to-date reference work encompassing all aspects of pituitary tumors, including consideration of basic science and molecular biology, their endocrine, radiologic, and pathologic diagnosis, and, lastly, issues of surgical, medical, and radiotherapeutic management. Thus, we hoped to

transcend conventional boundaries and biases of the specialty-specific approach. Given the enormous and ever-increasing literature on the subject, our task of distilling it into a single volume was made possible only by enlisting the contributions of renowned clinicians, surgeons, pathologists, and scientists well known to the medical literature. The result, a collaborative multidisciplinary effort, should well serve the interests of all who deal with pituitary tumors.

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