

Preface

One decade has passed since I first set “pen to paper” to launch the first edition of *Inflammatory Bowel Disease: Diagnosis and Therapeutics*, and yet, it seems that an entire lifetime of progress has been made in the world of “IBD” since that time. We were in the infancy of the biologic revolution; the first IBD gene was identified, and we were just beginning to get a hint that these diseases were sprouting up in people, and in places, where they formerly had never been seen.

Simultaneously, the world was changing as well. The economic roller coaster was perhaps felt strongest in the United States, spurring heated debate over the structure and function of the entire healthcare system, as the economic realities of soaring costs of care in our aging population finally were put on the front burner of political discourse and policy. The terms “cost-effectiveness” and “evidence-based medicine” have suddenly moved from the pages of the medical economic journals to the speeches of politicians, as a new focus on the delivery of health care was born.

The research community expanded further into novel pharmaceuticals, biological agents, and novel approaches of targeting the immune system. Stem cell research held forth the promise of true breakthroughs in our entire approach to disease management, while patient compliance deficiencies have spurred a quest for simpler, better accepted therapies.

This was also the “decade of the patient.” Expansion of patient privacy regulations, empowerment of patients through instantly available information (or misinformation) on the Internet, and “direct-to-consumer” marketing of prescription drugs introduced an entirely new two-way communication between the givers and receivers of health care. An unbridled “alternative” health care industry has developed into a very big business, and there is much interest among patients, and even practitioners, about these products. Unfortunately, the lack of regulation (and lack of interest among legislatures to close this legal loophole) leaves the public at the mercy of the unproven, both in terms of product efficacy and safety.

So what does this second version of *Inflammatory Bowel Disease: Diagnosis and Therapeutics, Second Edition* have to offer for its readers? The chapters contained in this book truly bring one to the cutting edge in IBD: the changing epidemiology, the explosion in genetics, and new understanding of the pathogenesis of disease.

Exciting new therapies are explored in both adults and children; updates on optimal uses of currently available therapies, alternative approaches to care, and novel surgical procedures detailed. The reader is then plunged into a truly evolving world of new radiographic, endoscopic, and other techniques utilized in the diagnosis of these diseases and their complications, with fascinating images readily available by today's technology. A new twist in this edition is the "pathology slide show," which clearly shows the major findings and differential diagnoses that one will encounter with patients with suspected or confirmed IBD. Rounding out the tour are new findings in the diagnosis and prevention of colorectal cancer in IBD, economic challenges in the new world, as well as issues specific to women with IBD and those with fecal diversions.

The end result is a culmination of 10 more years of knowledge, a decade of more advances, and the launch pad for the next waves of knowledge in the study and care of patients with IBD. It is my great hope that you as the reader find this second edition of *Inflammatory Bowel Disease* to be as rewarding as it has been to me to have the honor serve once again as editor.

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