
PREFACE

When we were asked by the Springer Company to consider editing a new book regarding advances on diarrheal diseases, we immediately thought that this was an exciting idea. In fact, in spite of the ongoing vast interest that this wide-reaching medical problem elicits worldwide, there is an evident lack of recent books presenting updates on the numerous disorders that the clinician may be faced with when managing a patient with acute or chronic diarrhea in a concise, easy-to-read manner. Thus, we worked at building a book with the aim of providing in a conveniently accessible package a comprehensive collection of accurate and timely information on the management of diarrhea in pediatric and adult patients.

The final product has a clinically-oriented tone directed to the practicing physician in a broad range of qualifications and settings including pediatric and medicine residents' fellows pursuing a career in gastroenterology and physicians practicing in academic and non-academic medical environments.

In the 27 chapters, well-known and respected authorities from North America and Europe have joined forces in covering diverse issues, from the rarest to the most common, so as to offer the reader an exhaustive yet concise view on disorders ranging from the very benign to the life-threatening. The last two chapters, by the editors, provide a simplified empirical approach to the patient with diarrhea and an update on the emerging role of probiotics.

It is our hope and expectation that the readers will find the book enjoyable and, most importantly, helpful in their daily practice when facing patients with challenging diarrheal disorders.

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