
Preface

This is a new book series entitled Neuroscience and Respiration, a subseries of Springer's renowned Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology. The book volumes present contributions by expert researchers and clinicians in the field of pulmonary disorders. The chapters provide timely overviews of contentious issues or recent advances in the diagnosis, classification, and treatment of the entire range of pulmonary disorders, both acute and chronic. The texts are thought as a merger of basic and clinical research dealing with respiratory medicine, neural and chemical regulation of respiration, and the interactive relationship between respiration and other neurobiological systems such as cardiovascular function or the mind-to-body connection. In detail, topics include lung function, hypoxic lung pathologies, epidemiology of respiratory ailments, sleep-disordered breathing, imaging, and biomarkers. Other needful areas of interest are acute respiratory infections or chronic inflammatory conditions of the respiratory tract, exemplified by asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or those underlain by still unknown factors, such as sarcoidosis, respiratory allergies, lung cancer, and autoimmune disorders involving the respiratory system.

The prominent experts will focus their presentations on the leading-edge therapeutic concepts, methodologies, and innovative treatments. Pharmacotherapy is always in the focus of respiratory research. The action and pharmacology of existing drugs and the development and evaluation of new agents are the heady area of research. Practical, data-driven options to manage patients will be considered. The chapters will present new research regarding older drugs, performed from a modern perspective or from a different pharmacotherapeutic angle. The introduction of new drugs and treatment approaches in both adults and children will be discussed. The problem of drug resistance, its spread, and deleterious consequences will be dealt with as well.

Lung ventilation is ultimately driven by the brain. However, neuropsychological aspects of respiratory disorders are still mostly a matter of conjecture. After decades of misunderstanding and neglect, emotions have been rediscovered as a powerful modifier or even the probable cause of various somatic disorders. Today, the link between stress and respiratory health is undeniable. Scientists accept a powerful psychological connection that can directly affect our quality of life and health span. Psychological approaches,

by decreasing stress, can play a major role in the development and course of respiratory disease, and the mind-body techniques can aid in their treatment.

Neuromolecular aspects relating to gene polymorphism and epigenesis, involving both heritable changes in the nucleotide sequence and functionally relevant changes to the genome that do not involve a change in the nucleotide sequence, leading to respiratory disorders will also be tackled. Clinical advances stemming from basic molecular and biochemical research are but possible if the research findings are “translated” into diagnostic tools, therapeutic procedures, and education, effectively reaching physicians and patients. All that cannot be achieved without a multidisciplinary, collaborative, “bench-to-bedside” approach involving both researchers and clinicians, which is the essence of the book series Neuroscience and Respiration.

The societal and economic burden of respiratory ailments has been on the rise worldwide leading to disabilities and shortening of life span. COPD alone causes more than three million deaths globally each year. Concerted efforts are required to improve this situation, and part of those efforts are gaining insights into the underlying mechanisms of disease and staying abreast with the latest developments in diagnosis and treatment regimens. It is hoped that the books published in this series will fulfill such a role by assuming a leading role in the field of respiratory medicine and research and will become a source of reference and inspiration for future research ideas.

Titles appearing in Neuroscience and Respiration will be assembled in a novel way in that chapters will first be published online to enhance their speedy visibility. Once there are enough chapters to form a book, the chapters will be assembled into complete volumes. At the end, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Martijn Roelandse and Ms. Tanja Koppejan from Springer’s Life Sciences Department for their genuine interest in making this scientific endeavor come through and in the expert management of the production of this novel book series.

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