
Preface

This volume is the first devoted solely to hypoparathyroidism and is intended for those who must deal with this disorder. The introduction of a book on a field of clinical medicine today requires considerable justification. In the field of hypoparathyroidism, the recent growth of medical knowledge in general has created the need for a new volume fully dedicated to this topic.

That there has been a recent explosion of knowledge on the subject of hypoparathyroidism cannot be doubted, and much of the acceleration in its pace can be attributed to new insights into etiopathogenesis, epidemiology, and substitutive therapy. PubMed offers about 7,100 references to hypoparathyroidism since 1926, with over 1,200 published in the past 5 years. It is now a pleasure to record that the intensified research in hypoparathyroidism has matured to the point that a handbook can be fully dedicated to an area that is enjoying a spectacular increase in interest among basic researchers and clinicians alike.

The information made available in the 38 chapters of this volume has been brought together from widely diverse sources, and, in some instances, is reported here for the first time. Many subjects have been presented both in broad outline and in more comprehensive detail in different chapters to meet the differing requirements of the target audiences. The book is designed for use in the clinic and in the basic science laboratory connected to the clinic. Every effort has been made to make available sufficient basic and clinical knowledge to satisfy the reader's curiosity about each of these aspects.

This book is dedicated to our mentor, Gerald D. Aurbach, MD, whose pioneering studies on parathyroid hormone led to dramatic advances in our understanding of some hereditary diseases of calcium metabolism including pseudohypoparathyroidism. Gerry was not only a fine physician and an elegant scientist but also a lover of classical music and an avid fan of the Washington Redskins football team. Through his wisdom and daring insights, he showed us the way in science and in life. This book honors him as a great scientist but also as a gentle, wise, and supportive person, loved and respected by everyone.

Credits for this book are many. The first of these goes to the authors of the chapters, all leaders in their respective fields, for it is the success of their endeavors that forms the basis of and the reason for this publication. Credit is also due to the Springer team for their formidable effort in attending to the many needs that were part of the making of the handbook on

hypoparathyroidism. The foreword to the book was kindly provided by Dr. Allen M. Spiegel, another of Gerry's students, who has contributed greatly to our understanding of calcium metabolism.

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