
Preface

In the last two decades, the major health international organizations have correctly addressed their efforts to fight the spread of the AIDS pandemic, and many reports and specialist books have documented the wealth of HIV-1 research that has been carried out. This book aims to attract the readers' attention to other members of the Retrovirus family, namely the human T-lymphotropic viruses (HTLVs), which, despite the frequency of the infection and the severity of the diseases associated with them, remain not so well known to people working in the medical fields. It is intended to promote and improve the interest in the study of HTLV pathogenicity and the related health problems. To this end, the most updated technical information about HTLV determination and the methods to investigate their interaction with the host immune system and interfering pathogens are reported.

The book is organized into five main parts. Part I covers essential aspects of epidemiology and virus transmission. Part II includes novel and robust methodologies for studying the effects of trans-activating regulatory HTLV proteins, while Part III provides the latest techniques for genotyping and gene expression analysis. Part IV addresses cellular phenotype and dynamics. Finally, Part V contains an overview of progress on new therapeutic strategies against HTLV infection. Although the main topic of this book is HTLV-1 (human T-cell leukemia virus type 1), it also deals with other HTLV infections, as in the case of bovine leukemia virus (BLV), covering the major highlighted issues with the hope that this work could give new impulse for opening a wider debate among researchers.

I would like to thank all participants who submitted their chapters, for their great efforts in bringing this book to fruition.

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