Behçet’s disease and thrombophilia

Surely the authors of the comprehensive review of Behçet’s disease and thrombophilia meant to cite the year 1937, not 1973, for Behçet’s eponymic description of the disease. However, contrary to their statement, Behçet was not the first to describe the disease that now bears his name. He was preceded by Shigeta in Japan (1924), Adamantiades in Greece (1931), and Whitwell in Great Britain (1934), probably also by Kurosawa, Lipschutz, and arguably even earlier by Hippocrates, among extant descriptions. Behçet deserves to have the disease named after him, however, because he was the first modern author to group the various ophthalmic, dermatological, and orogenital lesions together as a syndrome.

G E Ehrlich
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA; g2e@mindspring.com

Authors’ reply

The authors thank Dr. Ehrlich for his comments. Obviously an overlooked typing error led to the wrong year of Hûlusi Behçet’s first description in 1937, of the triad of recurrent oral aphthous ulcers, genital ulcers and uveitis as a single disease entity. Because other reports cited by Dr. Ehrlich, as well as a few others, were reports which did not group all the findings into one disease, we did not relate to them. These include Hippocrates as the first to describe fever, aphthous ulcers, genital ulcerations, chronic eye inflammation, loss of vision, carbuncles etc, ulcerations, genital ulcerations, chronic eye.

The excitement of the immense progress in patient management in chronic rheumatic diseases that has been made since the first edition in 1995 is felt throughout these pages. The second edition of Treatment of rheumatic diseases: a companion to Kelley’s textbook of rheumatology provides excellent reviews of our improved understanding of cellular and molecular mechanisms in the pathogenesis of inflammation and autoimmunity, accurate summaries of recent treatment trials in various rheumatological disorders, reasonable and logical conclusions from the trials with an emphasis on the daily clinical importance, and comprehensive up to date knowledge of the management of patients with rheumatic diseases. Well written, inspiring and easy to read, it is valuable for both clinicians in primary care and specialists in rheumatology. Undoubtedly, it is a worthy companion to Kelley’s textbook of rheumatology.

The predominantly American authorship of the book is the reason for a distinct bias in the approach to patients with rheumatic diseases which, however, is rarely a major problem. The 22 chapters from the previous edition are rewritten, and 18 new chapters have been included. Three main sections concentrate on the different diagnostic approaches, the management of patients with rheumatic syndromes when no definite diagnosis has been made and, in detail, on the management of patients with a definite diagnosis. The editors’ goal of providing information on published data together with specific, sometimes personal, recommendations is met perfectly by most of the authors. However, the aim of maintaining as far as possible the uniqueness of each author’s contribution is achieved at the cost of a lack of a uniform structure for the individual chapters. This is best exemplified by the varied use of subheadings and the different styles of tables and figures. Most notably, these personal recommendations to the authors to deal with the problem described are sometimes not so easily detectable.

An absence of cross references to other chapters is a minor irritation. The colour illustrations are excellent, the reference sections are wide ranging (though some most recent publications should have been included), and the index is precise and extensive. All the chapters are well written, inspiring and easy to read, and logical conclusions from the trials with an emphasis on the daily clinical importance, and comprehensive up to date knowledge of the management of patients with rheumatic diseases. The predominant American authorship of the book is the reason for a distinct bias in the approach to patients with rheumatic diseases which, however, is rarely a major problem. The 22 chapters from the previous edition are rewritten, and 18 new chapters have been included. Three main sections concentrate on the different diagnostic approaches, the management of patients with rheumatic syndromes when no definite diagnosis has been made and, in detail, on the management of patients with a definite diagnosis. The editors’ goal of providing information on published data together with specific, sometimes personal, recommendations is met perfectly by most of the authors. However, the aim of maintaining as far as possible the uniqueness of each author’s contribution is achieved at the cost of a lack of a uniform structure for the individual chapters. This is best exemplified by the varied use of subheadings and the different styles of tables and figures. Most notably, these personal recommendations to the authors to deal with the problem described are sometimes not so easily detectable.
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