Notes and news

Forthcoming events

In 1993

4–5 Mar Biologic agents in autoimmune diseases III, Washington, DC. Sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation, American College of Rheumatology, American Society for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institutes of Health. Contact: Marianne H Kaple, Arthritis Foundation, 1314 Spring Street, NW Atlanta, GA 30309, USA. Tel: (404) 872 7100.

15–19 Mar Seminar in advanced rheumatology, New York University Medical Center. Fee $650. CHE: 25.5 category I credit hours—AMA. Contact: Melanie Fanelli, New York University, 550 First Avenue, New York, NY 10016, USA. Tel: (212) 263 5295.

24–26 Mar BSR tenth annual general meeting, Harrogate. Closing date for submission of abstracts 4 December 1992. Contact: BSR, Lorraine Johnstone, Conference Manager, 3 St Andrew’s Place, London NW1 4LB. Tel: 071 224 3739. Fax: 071 224 0156.

30–31 Mar Third international symposium on ankylosing spondylitis, Middlesex Hospital—HLA-B27: 20 years on. Registration fee £150. Contact: Dr Alan Ebringer, Department of Rheumatology, Middlesex Hospital, London W1.

1–4 Apr Second international symposium on the immunotherapy of the rheumatic diseases, Brighton. Contact: Professor G S Panayi, Rheumatology Unit, Division of Medicine, 4th Floor Hunts House, UMDS, Guy’s Hospital, London SE1 9RT. Tel: 071 955 4394. Fax: 071 407 5134.

30 Jun–1 July Behçet’s disease: sixth international conference, Paris, France. Abstract deadline: 1 March 1993. Contact: B Wechsler, Department of Internal Medicine, Pitie-Salpêtrière Hospital, 83 Bde de L’Hôpital, 75013 Paris Cedex 13, France. Fax: 33 (1) 45 70 63 53.

4–10 July XVIIIth ILAR congress of rheumatology, Barcelona, Spain. Contact: Viajes Iberia Congressos, Diagonal, 523 10 08029 Barcelona, Spain. Tel: 34 3 4195151. Fax: 34 3 4051390. Programmes available from the BLAR secretariat.

10–15 Oct Congress of the International Association of Inflammation Societies, Vienna, Austria. Registration fees US $350, or $250 for trainee participants, or $400 and $300 respectively after 1 February. Contact: Inflammation ‘93 Congress Secretariat, ICOS Congress Organization Service, Schleifmuhlgasse 1, A–1040, Vienna, Austria.

Book review


This is an enormous book in size, ambition, and achievement. I had expected a book mainly devoted to rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, scleroderma, and other members of the ‘connective tissue disease’ group, but this is much more. A more accurate, but unwieldy title would be ‘Pathological Basis of Diseases which Affect Connective Tissues’, for it includes subjects as diverse as infective arthritis, amyloidosis, pseudoxanthoma elasticum, and ochronosis.

The first part outlines current knowledge of the traditional connective tissues, and the cells, fibres, and acellular matrix of which they are composed, with particular emphasis on cartilage and synovium, and other components of joints. The second part covers the mechanisms underlying the diseases affecting connective tissues, with chapters devoted to biochemical, immunological, mechanical, and inflammatory mechanisms. There is also a short chapter entitled ‘Fibrosis’, which is a curious hotchpotch of the basic science of collagen formation, followed by brief summaries of such topics as retroperitoneal fibrosis, scar and keloid formation, and the fibromatoses.

Finally, there are chapters devoted to the pathology of the autoimmune ‘connective tissue diseases’ (rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, polymyositis, systemic sclerosis), the most important diseases of connective tissue (osteoarthritis, intervertebral disc disease), and some mixed chapters on heritable, endocrine, nutrition, and metabolic disorders.

The book is well written, with abundant black and white illustrations illustrating clinical, radiological, and pathological features; the pictures are of good quality, well reproduced, and of a good size. A useful feature is the presence of numerous summary tables which, in addition to presenting information in a concise, easily assimilable manner, also have the effect of breaking up large blocks of text, giving visual appeal and aiding digestion. At the end of each chapter is a substantial collection of references, including some from the early 1990s, remarkable in view of the presumably long gestation period of a book of this size and complexity.

I enjoyed reading this book and learnt a great deal from it. There are a few anomalies (for example, the inclusion of erythema multiforme in the ‘Vasculitis and vasculopathy’ chapter), and occasionally an unusual selection of topics and illustrations, but in the main this is an excellent book to read for illumination and pleasure, and to have on the shelf as a reference source. I hope the editor and team of contributors have the energy and stamina to provide pathologists and clinicians with subsequent editions.

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