

BOOK REVIEW

Schuurman H.-J., Feutren G., Bach J.-F. (editors): Modern Immunosuppressives. Birkhäuser Basel, Boston, Berlin, 2001, ISBN 3-7643-5981-1, 168,- SFr

This book has been published in the series on Milestones in Drug Therapy, edited by Micheal J Parnham and Jacques Bruinvels. Indeed, immunosuppressives belong to the most recently developed and important drugs. Since the introduction of cyclosporine in 1980, numerous new anti-inflammatory therapeutic regimes have been developed. These include, for example, tacrolimus, leflunomide, or sirolimus, as well as new monoclonal antibodies directed against CD52, CD25 or TNF- α . The clinicians can now design individualized treatment protocols, which can be optimized between the therapeutic and side effects for an individual patient. The textbook starts with an overview of the existing drugs including their history and global perspectives. The four main chapters deal with immunosuppressive drugs, i.e., cyclosporine and related substances, biologicals describing therapeutic useful monoclonal antibodies (for example against T-cells or the IL-2 receptor), new avenues in immunosuppression focusing on gene therapy approaches to immunosuppression, and perspectives, giving experiences, global interpretation, and lessons learned from treatment with immunosuppressive drugs. The order of this textbook is related to the substances, and not to the diseases, which might be treated. Therefore, it should be mainly used as a reference book related to the benefits and side effects of each of the substances described. Its use for clinical approaches i.e., to search for assistance in treatment of a specific disease is not in the focus of the authors, and less practicable. The textbook is well written, and contains a broad collection of information needed in understanding and application of anti-inflammatory (immunosuppressive) drugs. Most of the chapters are well illustrated, and all of them provided with an extensive literature. The textbook can be recommended to readers who want to inform themselves with the latest aspects of immunosuppressives, who are working in this field, or who want to have a continuous education in treatment of their patients.

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