
Although there are now many excellent textbooks of clinical virology, few address in detail the particular problems of laboratory diagnosis. This book is aimed at those working in the laboratory, although detailed methods are not usually given; rather, an overview of the various approaches to diagnosis for individual virus infections. It is divided into two parts, the first being a series of 10 chapters on general aspects of diagnosis, most consisting of a list of techniques. These are valuable introductions and descriptions, and I particularly liked the chapter which discussed sensitivity, specificity, and predictive value of diagnostic tests. The remaining 28 chapters each discuss a particular virus or virus group, with each being subdivided into sections and variably considering epidemiology, clinical features, pathogenesis, treatment and prevention, as well as diagnosis.

The balance of these sections in each chapter varies, demonstrating the problems of consistency in a book of 49 authors. All authors are from North America, and while the approaches described are not always those used in the United Kingdom. Particular examples are rubella, where complement fixation, indirect immunofluorescence, and passive haemagglutination are feature prominently, and the attention given to western blot for HIV antibody detection. Despite the problem of relating its content to local approaches to diagnosis, this is a worthy addition to the bookshelves of the specialised virus laboratory as it contains a wealth of information not readily available elsewhere. P MORGAN-CAPNER


This book should be bought by all haematologists who have an interest in leukaemia. The 14 chapters are written by an international cast of experts, providing an authoritative guide to current thinking on all aspects of leukaemic cells and illustrating the rapid developments that have occurred with new techniques since the first edition of this book published 10 years ago.

The high standard of writing and editorship is well illustrated by Professor Daniel Catovsky's overview in chapter 1, followed by contributions on cytochemistry and bone marrow histology. These classic disciplines can sometimes be overshadowed by the newer technologies but their essential role in diagnosis is emphasised. Over recent years some of the greatest progress in investigating leukaemic cells has been in the area of immunology and for those haematologists lost in the CD maze, this book has comprehensive chapters on the use of monoclonal antibodies and on immunocytochemical labelling with monoclonal antibodies. Another important aspect of investigation of the leukaemic cell has been the increasing knowledge gained from chromosomal analyses and these are lucidly described in relation to acute leukaemia and the T cell malignancies. Cytogenetic discoveries have led on to the newer approach of genetic analysis which is described in two contributions, one on immunoglobulin and T cell receptor gene analysis in lymphoproliferative disorders and one on the analysis of molecular changes in leukaemia. Readers will also find much to interest them in chapters on ultrastructural morphology, lymphocyte functional assays, and in vitro clonal culture of myeloid cells. The text is well written, the illustrations of good quality, and most of the chapters contain extensive technical appendices. This is a practical book which should be readily available for everyone working in diagnostic and research laboratories who have an interest in learning about leukaemia and how to investigate it.

D W GORST


This slim volume is a commendably compact and thorough distillation of practical clinical pathology of AIDS and HIV infection. Half is by the authors; the rest is written in comparable style and depth. There is a pleasing straightforwardness of approach, the whole giving a strong sense of being written from first-hand and substantial experience. Relevant issues such as epidemiology, infection control, and pathogenesis are covered in pithy, readable accounts, with useful tabulations; while not attempting to cover every theory of pathogenesis, they extract the essence without loss of perspective or balance.

The bulk comprises systematic pathology in practical and authoritative sections, combining readability and thoroughness, with a sufficiency of detail for most practising clinical pathologists. I was impressed by the matching of detail with prevalence, avoiding the hazard of showing rare "stamps" in preference to the diversity of common ones. There is a wealth of references, but a disappointing tendency towards North American insularity, and readable accounts, with useful tabulations; while not attempting to cover every theory of pathogenesis, they extract the essence without loss of perspective. A J PINCHING