

Book reviews

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Diagnostic Breast Pathology. A Text and Colour Atlas. A Ahmed. (Pp 168; 153 illustrations; £60.) Churchill Livingstone. 1992. ISBN 0-443-03185-1

The field of breast pathology has undergone a revolution since the advent of breast cancer screening. It is no longer acceptable to report breast carcinomas without typing the tumours into known special types or without a full assessment of prognostic factors. In the past, lesions which would now be regarded as indicating an increased risk of developing carcinoma were not recognised. The screening programme has brought to light a number of conditions which were rarely seen, such as radial scars and small foci of ductal carcinoma in situ. This atlas discusses the known entities well with excellent colour pictures and includes the immunohistochemical results which are now essential when assessing difficult breast lesions. As would be expected from this author the text also includes extensive electron microscopic findings, but these are not excessive in number and complement the text and histological features.

The atlas is essentially aimed at the diagnostic histopathologist and, because of this, some of the more important clinical features, such as the bilaterality of lobular carcinomas, are given rather cursory treatment. Another slight criticism is that no radiographic correlations are present and cytology is not represented but these are probably outside the scope of a text devoted to the microscopic appearances alone. The newer immunohistochemical prognostic markers are also not generally discussed or illustrated.

In general, therefore, this atlas is highly recommended for practising and trainee histopathologists but will be of limited use to clinicians unless they wish to understand in detail the day to day difficulties of a diagnostic breast pathologist.

CA WELLS

Cytotoxic T Cells in HIV and Other Retroviral Infections. Ed P Racz, NL Letvin, JC Gluckman. (Pp 178; £83.50.) Karger. 1992. ISBN 3-8055-5469-9

This volume resulted from a workshop held at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Hamburg and was supported by the European Community Project "Immunopathology and Immunology of HIV-related diseases".

In recognition of the fact that cytotoxic T lymphocytes have a central role in controlling HIV, as in other viral infections, the papers presented represent current research activities in the cellular immunology of HIV-1 and 2, SIV, and HTLV-1. The molecular basis for cytotoxic T cell recognition of HIV, the functional characteristics of these cells, and their roles in protection against disease progression and contributions to clinical manifestations are covered in contributions from many parts of the world. In the section on animal models a detailed analysis of cytotoxic T lymphocyte responses of lentiviruses in non-human primates is presented, together with a description of the use of a primate model for assessing cytotoxic T lymphocyte responses to vaccination.

In the third and final section recent advances in our understanding of histological changes in lymphoid tissue in HIV infection are described, together with the localisation of cytotoxic T cells and information on the possible roles of cellular adhesion molecules and cytokines in these processes.

The book is clearly important to cellular immunologists and virologists working in the area of retroviral vaccine development. It will be of interest to other virologists and other clinicians and scientists working on HIV infections. The latter groups will, however, find it heavy going. It surely behoves all scientists to render their presentations easily understandable by colleagues in other disciplines. For example, the sentence "Similar specific effects of peptide were found on H-2K^b in RMA-S and HLA A 2.1 in .174/T2," is not exactly easy to follow, even if it is referenced. The book would have benefited considerably from some basic information, either a glossary or preferably an introductory chapter to set the scene and to guide the uninitiated through the minefield of acronyms and abbreviations which characterises modern immunology.

DJ JEFFRIES

Electrical Trauma: the Pathophysiology, Manifestations and Clinical Management. RC Lee, EG Cravalho, JF Burke. (Pp 440; £65.00.) Cambridge University Press. 1992. ISBN 0-521-38345-5

This is the first book entirely devoted to the pathophysiology and clinical treatment of electrical injuries. The three named authors are actually also the editors of chapters by over 30 expert contributors, all but two from the United States. None of these is a pathologist and the book is not really concerned with fatal electrocution, though there are a few references to fatalities, including delayed death. The book is a mixture of electrical physics, bio-engineering and much surgical expertise, especially in the plastic and reconstructive field.

Probably everything that is currently known about the pathophysiology of electrical damage to tissues is contained in this collection of monographs, which has

copious references. Its spectrum of interest swings from the acute treatment of burns to cell membrane rupture by electrical fields. Some of the chapters require considerable knowledge of electrical nomenclature, measuring equipment, and higher mathematics, but the clinical sections are sharply demarcated from the more esoteric areas dealing with bio-electrical theory and practice.

There is not much of relevance to a corner's pathologist, but the book would be an asset to the library of any large general hospital, especially those with a busy accident department, burns unit, or plastic and reconstructive surgical service.

BH KNIGHT

Cytokine Therapy. Ed DW Galvani, JC Cawley. (Pp 193; £35 hardback; £15 paperback.) Cambridge University Press. 1992. ISBN hardback 0-521-41232-3; paperback 0-521-42337-6

Knowledge of the structure and functions of cytokines has rapidly expanded over a short time, and with their introduction into clinical treatment it is essential that clinicians and pathologists are aware of the current position and future developments. This is easier said than done since the literature on cytokine biology is mainly published in journals infrequently read by clinicians, whereas the papers on their clinical use are still often preliminary and give confusing results. There is, therefore, a definite requirement for a concise well written book determining the clinical role of cytokines: fortunately, Galvani and Cawley have satisfied that requirement with this book.

Written by international experts, each chapter deals both with the molecular and biological properties of the clinically relevant cytokines with a review of their therapeutic trials. The section on erythropoietin provides a graphic illustration of the speed of change since the original description of the cloning and expression of the human gene for erythropoietin was published in 1985, the first clinical trial completed within one year, and the commercial availability worldwide of the drug by 1989. Similar rapid developments are described in chapters on granulocyte macrophage colony-stimulating factor, granulocyte colony-stimulating factor, interleukins -1, -2 and -3, interferon α , interferon γ , and tumour necrosis factor. The clear message to the reader for all of these cytokines is that while it is still early days to assess fully their clinical potential, there is no doubt that they will play an increasingly important therapeutic part in many areas of medicine.

In order to make sense of a complex subject, the editors have logically dealt with each cytokine separately, but physiologically there are highly complex interactions between various cytokines, and future clinical developments are likely to be in the area of cytokine combinations. The characteristics of the cytokine network are elegantly and concisely described by Brenner in the concluding chapter.

The price of this book, whether in hardback or paperback, is a fraction of the costs of commercially available cytokines and I would recommend its purchase to any clinician using or contemplating using cytokine treatment in order that their decisions may be based on good scientific evidence.

DA WINFIELD