

Preface

Molecular Basis of Inherited Pancreatic Disorders



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Guest Editors

Progress in understanding the genetic basis of pancreatic disorders has been very rapid in recent years. This progress is marked by two important anniversaries. It is 20 years ago that the insulin receptor was cloned and 10 years to the day that the genetic basis of hereditary pancreatitis was solved—a discovery that has permitted research into the pathogenesis of pancreatitis in general to proceed in completely new directions. To update the current knowledge on the molecular basis of inherited pancreatic disorders affecting the endocrine and the exocrine portion of the organ, the present volume of the *Endocrinology and Metabolism Clinics of North America* was compiled.

Many of the advances involving pancreatic diseases that are detailed in this volume were organized and presented in preliminary form at the Fifth International Symposium on Inherited Diseases of the Pancreas held in Graz Austria in the summer of 2005 and sponsored jointly by the European Pancreatic Club and the North American Pancreatic Study Group. For the first time, this meeting brought together experts on endocrine disease with experts on exocrine pancreatic disorders to discuss recent developments in their fields. The meeting also provided the backdrop for the introduction of new and previously unpublished data, such as the discovery of mutations in the *ubr1* gene as the cause of Johanson-Blizzard-Syndrome. One of the benefits of research into the genetic basis of pancreatic disorders is the fact

that disease mechanisms identified in rare and often monogenetic disorders can lead to a much better understanding of pancreatic diseases in general.

This issue of the *Endocrinology and Metabolism Clinics of North America* is filled with practical information about the unusual as well as the common diseases of the pancreas, with a major focus on inherited forms of diabetes, pancreatitis, and cancer. Clinical and genetic aspects deal with early detection, phenotype-genotype correlation, and treatment. Also, new experimental disease models in which the pathophysiology of the respective disorders has been studied are introduced to the reader. Together, this volume represents the most important and up-to-date information on new aspects of pancreatic diseases that the editors could assemble.

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