

## Preface



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*Guest Editor*

Crystal deposition arthropathy continues to be one of the most common inflammatory rheumatic disorders that constitutes significant public health problems. These problems are anticipated to grow in scope in view of the growing elderly population worldwide and increasing prevalence of risk factors for these disorders. There have been many exciting recent developments in crystal arthropathy research, and the current issue of *Rheumatic Disease Clinics of North America* intends to summarize these data and put them into context.

First, recent epidemiologic data are reviewed, including the overall disease burden and modifiable risk factors of gout, which have implications for the prevention and management of this painful condition. An article discusses the major chronic disorders associated with hyperuricemia or gout and acknowledges the ongoing research and debate on their independent pathogenetic links. Recent elucidation of molecular mechanisms of urate crystal-induced inflammation and renal urate transport mechanisms is reviewed in two articles, both of which represent substantial advancement in our pathogenetic understanding with potential therapeutic implications. Two articles review therapeutic approaches for crystal deposition arthropathy: one for overall therapeutic modalities, including history and recent advances, and the other for all relevant human clinical trials, including trials of the new potent agents in development.

Specific to calcium deposition diseases, one article updates their overall pathogenesis and clinical manifestations. Two separate articles review the potential pathogenetic roles of calcium deposition on other major disorders in a balanced

manner: one for osteoarthritis and the other for nonrheumatic disorders. Finally, another article reviews radiographic modalities that are used for crystal arthropathy. Special thanks are owed to Anthony Reginato, MD, PhD, for assisting reviews of these last four articles. It is hoped that putting these articles together will help disseminate these important recent developments among clinicians and researchers in the field and stimulate research that will elucidate further the pathogenesis of these disorders and their associated conditions and lead to improved methods of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

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