

Preface



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Guest Editor

This issue of the *Rheumatic Disease Clinics of North America* takes an in-depth look at key aspects of osteoporosis and presents significant advances that have occurred in the field recently. In particular, this issue gathers the work of a number of top researchers in the field to discuss epidemiology, clinical aspects of the disease, and treatment options, as well as emerging issues. There is a particular emphasis on glucocorticoid osteoporosis and the emerging field of osteoimmunology, which connects the fields of immunology and inflammatory bone loss.

The epidemiology of osteoporosis and the role of bone mineral density in the definition and prediction of fractures, as well as the most current information on the geographical distribution of the disease, are reviewed by Cyrus Cooper and Elaine Dennison. The issue also includes a thoughtful article by Luigi Sinigaglia devoted to the epidemiology of bone loss in inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, and ankylosing spondylitis. Genetic factors have been identified as playing an important role in the determination of bone mass and fractures, and recent advances in their role in osteoporosis are reviewed by Omar Albagha and Stuart Ralston.

Marc Hochberg reviews recommendations and algorithms for identifying persons who should undergo measurement of bone mass in an attempt to identify women and men with low mass who should undergo treatment to reduce their risk of fracture. Bisphosphonates are the most commonly used agents in the management of osteoporosis. Despite their established therapeutic value, a number of issues of uncertainty remain, particularly in

connection with their optimal long-term use and toxicity. These emerging issues are discussed by Ian Reid. Anabolic agents, such as parathyroid hormone, and the use of combination and sequential therapies are also discussed in depth by Nancy Lane. Compliance with and adherence to osteoporosis therapies are increasingly recognized as issues in a disease process in which long-term therapy is required, and Stuart Silverman provides a thoughtful discussion on this topic.

For the rheumatologist, glucocorticoid osteoporosis is always an issue of concern, and Jean-Pierre Devogelaer provides an update on recent developments in this important topic. Finally, the pathogenesis and treatment of inflammation-induced bone loss are reviewed by Evange Romas.

Throughout this issue, there is an emphasis on advances in scientific knowledge as they relate to the biology of postmenopausal bone loss in women and inflammation-induced bone loss in both women and men, and on the diagnosis of and therapy for the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis.

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