

FOREWORD



The liver has long been a primary focus of attention for body MR imagers. As the body's largest solid organ, and one that is vulnerable to a spectrum of neoplastic and non-neoplastic conditions, it is of major clinical importance. Furthermore, since the early days of MR, it has been apparent that many of these hepatic conditions can be demonstrated to particular advantage using the flexible contrast that MR pulse sequences provide. The availability of novel MR contrast agents, phased array body coils, breathhold imaging, and other technologic developments has further contributed to MRs ability to detect, characterize, and stage hepatic abnormalities. The fact that a comprehensive discussion of liver MR imaging requires two volumes of *Magnetic Resonance Imaging Clinics of North America*—one focused on techniques and contrast agents and the other on clinical issues—attests to the growth and importance of hepatic MR imaging as a clinical tool.

Richard Semelka, MD has been at the forefront of the development and clinical implementation of advances in hepatic MR imaging. Richard completed his medical school and radiology residency training in Manitoba, Canada. He then proceeded to perform a fellowship in body CT in Winnipeg, followed by a clinical research fellowship in body MR imaging at the University of California, San Francisco. He spent 6 months as a Research Associate with Siemens, whereupon he returned to Manitoba as Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba and MRI Research Coordinator at the St. Boniface Research Foundation. In 1992, Richard was recruited to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he is currently Professor of Radiology, Director of Magnetic Resonance Services, and Departmental Vice-Chairman of Clinical Research. Richard has been a prolific contributor to the MR literature, publishing in excess of 150 manuscripts. He also is the author of three popular MR imaging textbooks and is a frequent speaker at MR forums around the world. Many thanks to Richard and to each of the contributing authors for this mangum opus on liver MR imaging.

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