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Colin Feek · Christopher Edwards

Endocrine and Metabolic Disease

With 43 Figures

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For William, Richard and Sam

Series Editor's Foreword

Endocrine and Metabolic Disease is the seventh book in a series of monographs on "Treatment in Clinical Medicine". Each book is complete in its own right and has been prepared by practising physicians with an interest in treatment and management, together with scientists involved in clinical research. The volumes are intended to fill a gap between standard textbooks of medicine and therapeutics and research reviews, symposia and original articles in superspecialist fields. It is the aim of the series to give authoritative up-to-date advice on treatment and management which will be of use to both specialists and non-specialists, and to allow recent advances in pathophysiology and developments in treatment to be viewed in the context of contemporary clinical practice. The approach is intentionally didactic. Each volume has been written by a minimum number of authors to ensure a degree of continuity and uniformity of style. The authors of this volume are Christopher Edwards and Colin Feek. They are widely respected clinical endocrinologists. Christopher Edwards is Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Western General Hospital, University of Edinburgh and Colin Feek, now a specialist physician in endocrinology in Wellington, New Zealand, was formerly a lecturer in Medicine at Edinburgh University. The book is based on their extensive clinical experience and research interests in endocrinology and metabolism.

As with previous volumes in the series, this book is divided into two sections. The first section systematically reviews clinical and therapeutic aspects of endocrine diseases, while the second section considers the clinical pharmacology of drugs used in endocrinology. All the major areas of endocrinology and metabolism are covered. The major fields of thyroid, adrenal and pancreatic disease are covered in depth and there are separate chapters on the ovary and testes, as well as on the pituitary gland and parathyroids. Allan Struthers, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharma-

cology at the University of Dundee, has contributed a chapter on the Clinical Pharmacology of Endocrine Drugs and there is a useful pharmacopoeia of drugs used in endocrinology included at the end of the volume.

This book should be useful to a wide range of doctors, medical students and other health personnel. It does not deal exclusively with rare syndromes but emphasises a practical approach to common clinical problems in endocrinology and metabolism.

Glasgow, November 1987

John L. Reid

Preface

The last decade has seen a major revolution in the development of endocrinology. In particular, the development of radioimmunoassays for hormones in biological fluids has improved our understanding of endocrinology in both health and disease, and their ready availability in the routine market-place of clinical medicine has permitted a greater accuracy of diagnosis. Advances in surgical technique have included the combination of the operating microscope and image intensifier for transsphenoidal surgery in the treatment of pituitary tumours, offering an operation with a high success rate and little morbidity. In the case of prolactin-secreting tumours, however, the advent of dopamine agonist therapy, achieving shrinkage of macroadenomas with restoration of vision where optic pathways have been involved, means that these patients can be treated without the urgent intervention of a skilled neurosurgeon. Computers are increasingly being used in the routine follow-up of common endocrine conditions, such as thyroid disease, allowing effective surveillance of a large reservoir of patients and response to changes in their hormonal status. Recombinant DNA technology has ensured supplies of pure human insulin and human growth hormone.

The object of this book is to present the current treatment of endocrine disease in the light of our latest understanding of endocrine physiology, the natural history of endocrine disorders and the therapeutic options available. We have tried to put the success of these various regimens into some perspective and to indicate those areas of endocrinology where current therapy is either unsatisfactory or without effect. In many of these, such as the disabling and lethal complications of diabetes and osteoporosis, there is obviously a great need for further research.

We are indebted to Allan Struthers for his contribution on the clinical pharmacology of endocrine drugs. We would also like to thank Kevin Miller for producing the illustrations for this book,

and Alison Munro for her help in typing and proofreading the manuscript.

July 1987

Colin M. Feek
Christopher R. W. Edwards

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