

Immunological Aspects of Reproduction and Fertility Control

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EDITED BY

J. P. HEARN

Director

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The Zoological Society of London*


MTP PRESS LIMITED
International Medical Publishers

Published by
MTP Press Limited
Falcon House
Lancaster, England

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1980
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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Immunological aspects of reproduction and fer-
tility control.

1. Human reproduction—Immunological
aspects
2. Contraception, Immunological

I. Title II. Hearn, John P.
612.6 QP251

ISBN 978-94-011-8041-2 ISBN 978-94-011-8039-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-94-011-8039-9

Mather Bros (Printers) Limited, Preston

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Preface

The no-man's-land between reproductive physiology and immunology is becoming crowded. The last 10 years have seen a revolution in our understanding of many reproductive processes, brought about by the application of ever more sophisticated immunological methods. The increasing precision of these techniques has given us specific ways of assaying, enhancing or blocking hormonal mechanisms to yield more critical and interpretable information.

In this volume eleven authors have presented the current status and future prospects of some immunological aspects of reproduction and fertility control. These include the relationships between mother and fetus, the diagnosis of pregnancy, the immunological complications seen in clinical management of human reproduction and some novel approaches for immunological control of fertility.

We hope that in these chapters we have achieved an up-to-date account of a fast-moving field that calls on several disciplines. We intend the book to provide an adequate background and a current review for research workers and clinicians who wish both to understand the complex mechanisms involved and to develop improved scientific and clinical methods. We hope too that the student and newcomer will find this a useful reference book.

As editor I have tried to leave each chapter able to stand on its own, risking slight overlap in one or two places where the same topic has been approached from different angles. My thanks in full measure are due to the authors for their hard work and promptness, to Annabel Gomm and Connie Nutkins for their help with organization and to the publishers; particularly Harry Bracken, for their unflinching encouragement and support.

John Hearn
London, April 1980