

Preface

It is almost 40 years since Dr. Jean Berger first described primary IgA nephropathy as a new disease entity. We are now fully aware that IgA nephropathy is one of the most common forms of chronic glomerulonephritis in the world. It is also recognized that this disease is the most frequent cause of end-stage renal failure despite the kidney being an innocent bystander with primary pathogenetic defect in the IgA molecule itself. Dr. Anthony Clarkson had emphasized that IgA nephropathy was a syndrome of uniform morphology, diverse clinical features and uncertain prognosis. The exact pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy is still obscure and specific treatment is not yet available.

Efforts by many investigators around the world have gradually elucidated various aspects of the pathogenesis and treatment of this disease. This unique volume provides a comprehensive overview of the advances in this disease over the last ten years. The volume covers the genetics, epidemiology, clinicopathological features, pathogenesis, prognostic mechanisms, and treatment of this unique disease. Twenty-seven chapters are written by 43 contributors from 13 countries. These contributors have been providing forefront scientific findings of this disease to the scientific community in the last 20 years. They have authored 17.5% of all 5535 scientific papers on IgA nephropathy in different languages listed on PubMed at October 2008. Such an expansive wealth of experience is concisely summarized in this unique volume.

My sincere thanks go to Professor Richard J. Glasscock, who discussed with me the editorial policy of this book. I owe to my many patients whose diseases have provided the most important insights and to the late Dr. Yu Chiu Kwong for his support of my research.

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October 2008