

The remaining portion of the book is dedicated to the newest class of drugs in the therapeutic armamentarium—the HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. An overview on the development and pharmacology of these agents, as well as clinical trials comparing them with other lipid-lowering drugs is presented and extensively referenced.

The book is based on proceedings of a symposium held in December 1987 in Paris and will be useful for clinicians with an interest in the evaluation and treatment of lipid disorders.

JOSE M. CABRAL, MD
MICHAEL D. CRESSMAN, DO
Lipid Research Clinic

MONOCLONAL ANTIBODIES IN DIAGNOSTIC IMMUNOCHEMISTRY

Edited by Mark R. Wick and Gene P. Siegal
Marcel Dekker

The virtual explosion in the number of commercially available monoclonal antibodies (MAb) with potential applications in diagnostic surgical pathology has left many practicing pathologists in a state of confusion. This book provides the essential background information. In addition, numerous tables provide the data that make the text useful as a quick reference guide for interpreting immunohistochemical (IH) results and for designing antibody panels appropriate for specific differential diagnostic problems.

The introductory chapter includes a sophisticated discussion of the genetic basis of antibody diversity and the production of MAb, along with a comprehensive, although somewhat tedious, discussion of various specific techniques for applying IH methods. In addition, a list of useful MAb together with their commercial sources and approximate specificities is provided.

The core of the book consists of 19 chapters, each devoted to a specific antigen or family of related antigens. Each chapter begins with a discussion of the antigen's biochemical properties. Various MAb, some commercially available and others experimental, that recognize the antigen of interest are then discussed. Finally, an attempt is generally made to discuss the sensitivity, specificity, and applicability of several MAb, as

well as the fixative or fixatives that should be used to optimize IH results. Four chapters are devoted to intermediate filament antibodies, which have proven to be particularly powerful reagents in the classification of a broad variety of neoplasms. Two chapters, which are quite detailed and comprehensive, concern the many lymphocyte differentiation antigens and leukocyte common antigen. Several chapters are devoted to antigens, such as milk-fat globule protein and carcinoembryonic antigen, that are expressed by various specific types of carcinomas. Discussions of four antigens that are relatively tumor specific, including prostate-specific antigen, prostatic acid phosphatase, human chorionic gonadotropin, and placental alkaline phosphatase, are included. The specificity of some of these antibodies may be somewhat overstated. The authors do suggest combinations of antibodies in some instances, where the specificity of a single antibody is inadequate for differential diagnosis. Three chapters are devoted to neural and neuroendocrine antigens including chromogranin, S-100, and anterior pituitary hormones.

The last three chapters diverge somewhat from the remainder of the text. The first is an interesting historical and current perspective on the issue of tumor-specific antigens. In the second, antibodies to microbial antigens are briefly discussed and the intriguing possibility of using MAb as a therapeutic tool against viral and parasitic organisms is also mentioned. In the third, Dr. Siegal concludes with a look toward the future, including a brief examination of the possibility of using IH to study the role of oncogenes in cancer.

Monoclonal Antibodies in Diagnostic Immunocytochemistry is very well written. Even though there are 20 different contributors, the editors have achieved consistency in format and quality from one chapter to the next. The usefulness of using panels of MAb and the potential pitfalls in interpreting IH results are appropriately stressed throughout the book. Despite a few omissions and oversimplifications, and the inherent difficulty in writing an up-to-date review of a very rapidly changing field, this text should prove most valuable to the practicing pathologist who has access to a comprehensive IH laboratory, as well as to pathologists in training.

WILLIAM E. KATZIN, MD, PHD
Department of Pathology