Preface

Current Concepts in the Management of Pathologic Conditions

Just a couple of days ago, as I was making dinner for the family (self-preservation in my household), my 17-year-old daughter strolled into the kitchen.

“Something’s wrong with my gum behind the last tooth—it’s swollen and it hurts!”

Her complaint, heard hundreds of times per day in oral surgery practice, highlights the need for definitive guidance in our approach to management of the third molar. Should all third molars be removed? Only the symptomatic ones? And what is third molar pathology anyway?

Fortunately, increasing numbers of well-designed studies have provided insight into areas of pathologic abnormality encountered by each of us on a regular basis. This issue was conceived to highlight advances in knowledge, review difficult-to-manage conditions, and introduce the reader to new technologies that will impact the health of our patients, now and in the future.

Some of the articles published here discuss conditions commonly seen in daily practice; others present current understanding of less regularly encountered disease, and a few shine light on innovations so new that they are—at present—available in only a few teaching centers. Each will provide information valuable to surgical practice, and I encourage you to read every one of them. You won’t be disappointed.

As guest editor, I extend my appreciation to each of the authors represented in this volume. It is no small effort to research, organize, write, and rewrite a review article, sometimes sifting through hundreds of books and periodicals to cull the truth from an overabundance of published information. I think you, the reader, will find their endeavors worthwhile.

As always, a few acknowledgments are in order. I am grateful for the assistance of Elsevier editor John Vassallo; his regular reminders encouraged all of us to complete assignments—if not in a timely fashion, at least in the proper fashion (and I understand his stress ulcers are better now). Edward Leisner, librarian at the Erie County Medical Center, was most helpful in acquiring necessary articles. Jason Chwirut, assistant media specialist at the University at Buffalo, ably assisted with illustrations.

And my daughter? Her mother (my supervisor both at the University and at home) is a dentist. She was pleased to refer me to the guidelines on third molars published by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence: third-molar extraction isn’t indicated until the second episode of pericoronitis. I sure hope that doesn’t happen on prom night...

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