

BOOK REVIEW

Antonio Guglietta (Ed.)

Pharmacotherapy of Gastrointestinal Inflammation

CHF158,-/EUR 98,-*

2003. 156 pages. Hardcover

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The goal of the book, as stated in the preface, is “to review the pharmacotherapy of some inflammatory conditions of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and present them in an easy-to-read and easy-to-consult book format”. Four chapters on: 1) the pharmacotherapy of *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) infection, 2) novel therapeutic approaches on inflammatory bowel disease, 3) chronic hepatitis and 4) antibiotic associated colitis are followed by two chapters on 5) clinical considerations of nitric oxide-donating aspirins and 6) oral tolerance for the treatment of GI inflammation. Thus, this multiauthored book has six chapters which cover basic principles, recent advances and experimental approaches to selective aspects of GI inflammation. All chapters are extensively referenced. The Editor wrote that “perhaps the most difficult part of this work was the selection of the subjects to be included in the book”. As such, it may be understandable that some areas of GI inflammation are only briefly covered or are not covered at all. However, this narrow focus may be a handicap if the book is used as a stand-alone resource on pharmacotherapy of various GI inflammatory conditions.

As a gastroenterologist who frequently cares for patients infected with *H. pylori*, I gave particular attention to the first chapter. Unfortunately, I have found that this chapter (*Pharmacotherapy of Helicobacter pylori-associated gastritis*) was rather superficial, and its title was misleading. Chapters 2–6 are readable although each of them may have advantages and some disadvantages for both clinicians and research scientists; sometimes the balance between practical and theoretical consideration may not to be satisfactory. For example, novel therapeutic approaches of inflammatory bowel disease are extensively reviewed, but the principles of standard therapy are not provided. Diagnosis and management of chronic hepatitis are interestingly discussed with a particular attention to the spectrum of viral hepatitis, based on the current literature. I have found helpful comments on the diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis B and C.

In summary, this book represents rather a set of the reviews on selected account of the GI inflammation, than a textbook. It is a practical guide for GI inflammatory therapy but it also provides some basic data for management strategies. The content appears to be comprehensive although the quality of the reviews varies considerably from very good to average. The book is more successful in reviewing the basic-science literature for clinicians.

Which audience will be served by this book? The book is dedicated to less so for clinical specialists (gastroenterologists and hepatologists), but all the more for students and general practitioners.

Jerzy Ostrowski