Preface

The field of hepatic encephalopathy (HE) has seen major changes over the last decade. Accordingly, this is a perfect time to publish an update on this topic.

After the editors highlight some of the new perspectives on HE in the first article, Dr Jones expands on the pathogenesis of HE especially as it relates to the newer hypotheses. Dr Sakamoto and colleagues from southern California describe the assessment of HE in a very comprehensive fashion. Description of minimal HE or now-called covert HE is dealt with in great detail by Dr Kappus and Dr Bajaj from Virginia. The relatively new area on the whole spectrum of brain imaging alterations seen in patients with HE is contributed by Dr McPhail and colleagues of London, England.

The following articles describe the overall management of overt and covert HE. Dr Khungar and Dr Poordad cover the overt HE management area in detail, whereas the management of covert HE as a less developed area of therapeutics is discussed by the editors.

The article on sarcopenia or loss of lean body mass is quite unique. Lean body mass reduction is thought to modulate the expression of overt HE. Dr Periyalwar and Dr Dasarathy describe in detail our current understanding of the regulation of lean body mass in cirrhotics. Dr Riggio and colleagues in Rome have great experience in HE after the TIPS procedure and describe the current approach to this specific issue.

The last two articles in this issue touch on very important topics. These are the extent of reversibility of HE after liver transplantation and finally the relationship of HE to health-related quality of life. These articles by Todd Frederick from northern California and Giampaolo Bianchi and colleagues from Bologna, Italy finish out this update on HE.
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