Preface

Alcoholic Liver Disease

Alcohol is recognized by the general public as one of the most common causes of liver disease and, through the ages, its effects on the liver have been well described. Alcohol can cause a spectrum of liver diseases from fatty liver to acute hepatitis to cirrhosis and its complications. End-stage liver disease secondary to alcohol is a frequent indication for liver transplantation. This issue of Clinics in Liver Disease offers a comprehensive review of the broad spectrum of alcoholic liver disease from basic alcohol metabolism and immunology through the evaluation for liver transplantation and beyond.

In order to understand the scope of the problem, the prevalence and natural history of alcoholic liver disease are reviewed by Dr Reinus. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the biochemistry of alcohol metabolism and immunology by Drs Cederbaum and Duddempudi, respectively. Knowledge of the histological findings seen in alcoholic liver disease is essential for the determination of prognosis; these findings are reviewed by Dr Crawford. As alcohol can cause acute disease, the diagnosis and management of alcoholic hepatitis are reviewed by Dr Satapathy. An important component of care in patients with alcoholic liver disease is the management of their addiction and this vital, yet often neglected, aspect of care is discussed by Dr Albanese.

Alcohol use and abuse may lead to systemic effects. Certain infections are more commonly seen in patients with alcoholic liver disease; these are well reviewed by Drs Epstein and colleagues. Chronic use of alcohol may lead to nutritional deficiencies and these are reviewed in the issue by Dr Charlton.

Chronic alcohol use can lead to various complications of decompensated liver disease. Dr O’Brien reviews the long-term management of alcoholic liver disease and Dr Grewal discusses the relationship between alcohol and liver cancer. Selection criteria for liver transplantation are reviewed by Dr Leong and the management of specific issues in patients with alcoholic liver disease following liver transplantation is reviewed by Dr Gaglio.
This issue of *Clinics in Liver Disease* provides the reader with a soup-to-nuts review of the understanding of the mechanism of alcoholic liver disease as well the diagnosis and management of both acute and chronic alcoholic liver diseases and addiction management. It should be an excellent resource for any clinician caring for patients with this condition.

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