

FORWARD

Not too long ago it was often stated, and with considerable justification, that organ transplantation was more of a disease than a cure. The immunosuppressive therapy required to control or reverse rejection was the usual villain. Most of the morbidity and mortality were attributable to excessive requirements for steroids in order to prevent rejection. The other maintenance drugs, azathioprine (or cyclophosphamide) could and often did depress the bone marrow. The long list of complications from such non-specific immunosuppression ranged from merely annoying to deadly. It was found that every major organ system of the recipient could be affected and in a variety of ways.

In this book, a careful look has been taken at the many adverse ramifications of immunosuppressive therapy in chapters dealing with such diverse topics as the skin, the cardiovascular system, the endocrine system, the liver, the gastrointestinal tract and the musculoskeletal system. Throughout these chapters, as well as in other special sections, the ways in which immunosuppression can cause both opportunistic infections or malignant tumors have been carefully considered.

In addition, complications more or less specific to different kinds of organ grafts have been covered in chapters dealing with the transplantation of the kidney, liver, heart, lung, heart-lung, pancreas, cornea, and bone marrow. Each of these specialty chapters is unique in its own right and reflects the views of some of the most creative members of the transplant community. Virtually all of the Chapters give an outstanding survey of the assigned topics. With their look at the dark side of transplantation, the editors and authors have provided an important service to this new medical-surgical specialty.