

DEMENTIA WITH LEWY BODIES. 1996. Edited by Robert Perry, Ian McKeith and Elaine Perry. Published by Cambridge University Press. 510 pages. \$C156.00 approx.

This book arises from a workshop held in Newcastle, England in October 1995. The meeting brought together leading clinical and basic researchers with experience in the field of "Lewy body dementia". The book is divided into 3 parts prefaced by a bibliographic note on Friedrich Heinrich Lewy who, in 1912, first described the inclusion body subsequently named after him. Clinical issues are discussed in the first section which comprises 14 chapters. The most prominent symptomatology which distinguishes, albeit incompletely, Lewy body dementia from Alzheimer's disease, (i.e., hallucinations, systematic delusions, a fluctuating course, and parkinsonism particularly precipitated by neuroleptics) is repeatedly emphasized. Neuropsychological changes, positron emission tomography correlates and the relationship between Lewy body dementia and dementia in Parkinson's disease are important topics of discussion. The clinical workshop discussion provided a framework of clinical diagnostic criteria for the disorder termed "dementia with Lewy bodies" (DLB). These criteria were subsequently published in a review paper in *Neurology* quite recently.

The second part of the book discusses pathological issues. This is made up of 13 chapters discussing the pathological significance of Lewy bodies in dementia and the relationship between Alzheimer's disease, DLB and Alzheimer's disease. This latter issue remains challenging and confounding given the extremely common association between the two. Again the relationship between Parkinson's disease and DLB is discussed further in this section as are the genetic relationships between Parkinson's disease and Lewy body disease. The pathology workshop resumé provides a consensus of the pathologic and diagnostic criteria and assessments needed to define DLB as well as a discussion of the relationship between Lewy body pathology and other changes seen in these brains.

The third section addresses treatment issues. In this section there are 9 chapters, most of which consider the neurochemical disturbances found in DLB and potential clinical correlates of these changes. The principal disturbance is a marked cholinergic deficit and there are useful discussions of the potential role that these changes play both in the behavioural and cognitive spheres. Therapy with cholinergic agonists is discussed extensively. Because the workshop was held in 1995, tacrine is the only oral agent mentioned (results of newer acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, such as donepezil, will be of particular interest in the future). The confounding potential of dopaminergic therapy to worsen behavioural changes at the same time as improving parkinsonism and for cholinergic therapy to do the opposite highlights the need for newer selective agents in managing these problems. The final chapter (somewhat misplaced in the treatment section) discusses the potential relevance of oxidative stress in the pathogenesis of the degenerative changes in Parkinson's disease, DLB and Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia with Lewy bodies is now recognized as the second commonest cause of neurodegenerative dementia after uncomplicated Alzheimer's disease. Numerous outstanding questions remain and the current volume places many of them into perspective and establishes a framework from which to proceed with further investigations. The volume provides an in-depth introduction to the important issues that will be directing research in this field over the next several years. It can be strongly recommended for clinical and basic

investigators with interests in the broad field of neurodegeneration or those specifically working in the fields of behavioural neurology, neuropsychiatry, movement disorders and neuropharmacology.

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BAILLIERE'S CLINICAL NEUROLOGY: INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND RESEARCH-CEREBRAL GLIOMAS. 1996. Edited by W.K.A. Yung. Published by Harcourt Brace. 445 pages. \$C39.00 approx.

This book is comprised of a number of review articles on various aspects of cerebral gliomas. The main emphasis is on glioma therapy; however, there are chapters on basic science related to gliomas which are geared to those whose main focus is clinical. The basic science reviews include "Epidemiology of primary malignant brain tumours," Pathology and biological "markers", "Molecular genetics and tumour suppressor genes in gliomas," and "Growth factors and angiogenesis." These chapters are all written in such a way as to be easily understood by those of us not directly involved in basic science research. Scientific terms are explained and jargon is avoided. The chapters are clear, succinct and clearly discuss the relevance of the topics covered to clinical medicine.

The therapy chapters concern radiation therapy, surgery, chemotherapy, biological and monoclonal antibody therapy and gene therapy. These chapters are also very clearly written and review all the major therapies which have been reported in the literature. The authors do not hesitate to criticize clinical studies which do not provide useful information because of inadequate numbers of patients or for other reasons. They are also critical of those who have adopted new therapies which have not been compared to standard therapies by means of a randomized phase III trial. In the chapter on chemotherapy, the authors have written excellent suggestions for the design of a good chemotherapy trial, which could easily be adapted to other types of clinical trials in brain tumour patients.

The chapter on quality of life is particularly valuable. Traditionally, outcome of treatment of brain tumour patients has been measured by time to tumour progression and survival. Recently we have realized that quality of life and neuropsychological function are at least as important, if not more important, than these traditional measures. This chapter reviews methods of measuring quality of life in brain tumour patients, and recent articles reviewing neuropsychological function in brain tumour patients particularly the effects of treatment on neuropsychological function. This book would be particularly valuable for neurologists, oncologists and neurosurgeons who are not primarily involved in the field of neuro-oncology. It would provide excellent background reading for neurology, neurosurgery or oncology residents who need a relatively short, but thorough introduction to the field. Any physician who desires some information regarding gliomas will find this book very easy to read and understand. It might also be useful for basic scientists whose research is related to neuro-oncology and who desire some background reading in clinical neuro-oncology, especially current treatment of gliomas.

The main strength of this book is that it is concise, covers a wide variety of topics related to gliomas and is very readable and easy to understand.

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