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THROMBOSIS AND ATHEROSCLEROSIS

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PREFACE

VENOUS THROMBOEMBOLISM and atherosclerosis, frequently complicated by intra-arterial thrombosis, represent major health hazards in the Western world. During the last two decades a remarkable evolution has occurred in our understanding of the basic and the applied clinical sciences in these fields. Traditionally, scientists as skilled specialists have communicated regularly only with other workers in their particular disciplines. In recent years, however, the need for an interdisciplinary approach toward solving a problem of the magnitude of thrombosis and atherosclerosis has been emphasized.

Many recent advances in our knowledge of these disease conditions have resulted from the collaborative efforts of scientists in different fields. It was our feeling, therefore, that a volume for the clinician that stressed the multidisciplinary approach was needed. Accordingly, we invited outstanding scientist/clinicians from such diverse areas as cardiology, surgery, radiology, nuclear medicine, pathology, physiology, biochemistry, and hematology to participate in a "state of the art" volume providing information on the basic concepts, new approaches to diagnosis, and recommendations on the prevention and treatment of thrombotic disorders and atherosclerosis. With respect to atherosclerosis, major emphasis has been given to the role of the platelet. We chose this approach because of the recent completion of important large-scale clinical trials testing the efficacy of platelet-function-suppressing pharmacologic agents in the prevention of recurrent strokes and acute myocardial infarction.

Since there is still much to be learned in this area we have not attempted to present firm conclusions or unified consensus statements on all issues. As the reader peruses the volume, certain substantial differences of opinion will be evident. Thus, rather than being didactic, this work presents the current dia-

logue concerning the best methods of managing this serious health hazard. As such we believe it will supply the clinician, no matter what his special area of interest, with a background of information and suggestions that will be of value in his day-to-day handling of patients with atherosclerosis and thrombosis.

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