Preface

Thyroid Disorders and Diseases

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Guest Editor

Thyroid disorders and diseases are common and thyroid cancer is increasing at an alarming rate. It seems particularly propitious to have an issue of Medical Clinics of North America devoted to these general topics at the present time. Indeed, we are extremely fortunate to have contributions from a group of internationally respected authorities who review recent developments and put them into a practical clinical perspective. Important, clinically relevant topics such as thyroid hormone pathophysiology, evaluation and treatment of hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism, and approach to thyroid emergencies are discussed. There are many newer aspects of thyroid pathophysiology and thyroid diseases that are being explored. For example, the normal TSH reference range in elderly patients is now considered different from younger individuals; thus, decisions with regard to which patients should be treated for hypothyroidism are now more complex. The application of modern technology, such as the use of molecular diagnostic techniques, sonographic elastography, and surgical approaches to patients with thyroid nodules and cancer, has already modified clinical practice. The variable and important effects of thyroid hormone excess and deficiency on cardiac function and lipid metabolism are also discussed. The pathophysiology, assessment, and treatment of Graves’ ophthalmopathy, a particularly difficult disorder to treat, are reviewed. Diagnostic evaluation and management approach to patients with thyroid nodules, thyroid cancer, goiters, and thyroiditis are also discussed with practical, clinical advance given. Thyroid function in pregnancy is reviewed with clinical discussion regarding the expected changes in thyroid hormone metabolism during pregnancy. There are new recommendations regarding the approach to hypothyroid pregnant women who require additional levothyroxine therapy during gestation. There is an increasing movement toward developing evidence-based clinical guidelines. Recent guidelines regarding thyroid nodules and thyroid cancer, as well as thyroid physiology and perturbations in disease during pregnancy, are also highlighted.
Chekhov said “Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice.” We hope this issue will help you understand important and common thyroid disorders and diseases and that this knowledge will be applied in both clinical and research spheres to help humankind.

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