

CLINICAL GASTROENTEROLOGY

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Gastrointestinal Complications of Diabetes

A Comprehensive Guide

 Humana Press

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*To Lucija and Marta, who have brought joy
to our life.*

Preface

The prevalence of diabetes has reached epidemic proportions worldwide. Chronic diabetic complications represent the major cause of morbidity and mortality, accounting for the majority of the social and economic burden. While the importance of both micro- and macrovascular complications is widely recognized, the gastrointestinal (GI) tract has not been traditionally associated with diabetic complications. However, the fact that as many as 75% of diabetic patients report GI symptoms calls for attention. Diabetes may affect the entire GI tract from the oral cavity and esophagus to the large bowel and anorectal region, resulting in heterogeneous clinical presentation. The involvement of the hepato-biliary system further contributes to symptom diversity. The pathogenesis is complex and not completely elucidated. Nevertheless, the relationship between longer disease duration, poor glycemic control, and the development of all diabetic complications, including GI, has been well established. Many GI complications of diabetes seem to be associated with the dysfunction of neurons supplying the enteric nervous system, which causes abnormalities in intestinal motility, sensation, secretion, and absorption. Besides the complexity of the clinical manifestations of diabetic GI complications, the need to exclude other possible causes of gastrointestinal morbidity makes the approach to diagnosis very challenging. Optimal management of gastrointestinal complications requires a multidisciplinary approach focusing on a combination of glycemic control and symptom relief.

The aim of this textbook is to provide a comprehensive, state-of-the art review of the GI complications of diabetes, their pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnostic evaluation, and management. We hope it will serve as a valuable guide to practical management of diabetic patients with GI complications for physicians dealing with diabetes or gastrointestinal disorders as well as for researchers interested in this multidisciplinary problem. It has been written by a group of experienced clinicians whom we would like to thank for their great commitment, perseverance, and enthusiasm.

We are grateful to Prof. George Wu for valuable suggestions and support, and to Springer publisher and editors Mr. Andy Kwan and Ms. Saanthi Sankharaman for kind assistance.

Special thanks to Dr. Doris Ogresta and Sanja Stojsavljević for their great contribution throughout the process of writing this book.

We sincerely hope that physicians and students will find this book useful and interesting, making our efforts worthwhile.

Zagreb, Croatia
Zagreb, Croatia

Marko Duvnjak
Lea Smirčić-Duvnjak

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