G. Gasbarrini  S. Pretolani (Eds.)

Basic and Clinical Aspects of Helicobacter pylori Infection

With 76 Figures

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A century ago the Italian pathologist Bizzozero described the relationships between spiral bacteria and the mammalian gastrointestinal tract. Since 1982, when *Helicobacter pylori* was discovered, gastroduodenal disease have been completely revised as a consequence of the results of basic and clinical research in this field.

Progress in understanding the pathogenesis of this bacterium has been made by studying *H. pylori* infection in animal models. More specific diagnostic tools have been developed using new molecular biology techniques. Future trends are directed towards preparing a specific *H. pylori* vaccine.

A new classification for gastritis, the Sydney System, including *H. pylori* gastritis, was proposed in 1990. As concerns the clinical approach to peptic ulcer disease in the 1990’s, the majority of authors agree on the importance of *H. pylori* eradication. Moreover, recent clinical studies suggest that *H. pylori* infection can be associated with other gastroduodenal diseases, such as nonulcer dyspepsia and gastric cancer. Multicenter trials to standardize serological methods and evaluate the efficacy of new antimicrobial therapy schedules are planned throughout different European countries.

The fourth Workshop of the European *Helicobacter Pylori* Study Group was held in Bologna, Italy, in November 1991. Two years before Bologna University celebrated its ninth centennial, giving evidence of being the oldest University in the modern world. Thus the *H. pylori* story that has continued for more than a century has been discussed once again at the University with the oldest tradition in the world.

The papers presented at the fourth Workshop in Bologna were selected out of 363 original contributions sent to the organizing committee from 30 different countries and five continents. Of those 363 papers 49 were selected; these were presented orally and discussed in the plenary sessions at the workshop, and they have been compiled in extended form together with the lectures in this book. The opportunity of this choice is confirmed by the fact that 2 years after their presentation, the majority of these studies are surprisingly up to date and represent a fundamental advance in the knowledge of *H. pylori* infection.

The reader will find in this volume several topics on current problems related to gastroduodenal pathology and *H. pylori* infection:
symptoms and histology of nonulcerous dyspepsia, the role of surgical infections in geriatric age, pathogenic mechanisms associated with structural factors of the bacterium (toxins, adhesions, agglutinins) as well with the host immune response, the role of serology in the diagnosis of the infection, some aspects of molecular biology of the bacterium, and the newest therapeutic approaches.

We think that this book will be useful not only to researchers, looking for the most recent data on those topics, but also to the general practitioner who needs a comprehensive overview of the impact of this bacterium on gastroduodenal pathology and information about the therapeutic options.

This volume represents a continuation of the books already published as proceedings of the previous meetings of the EHPSG, also in its editorial and typographic features. Publishing these proceedings, within an acceptable time, is an important activity of the EHPSG and should be maintained in the future. It is with pleasure that we present this most recent collection of papers.

Stefano Pretolani (Secretary of IV Workshop of EHPSG)  
Giovanni Gasbarrini (President of IV Workshop of EHPSG)
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