Hemangiomas and Vascular Malformations
An Atlas of Diagnosis and Treatment

Foreword by
J. Leonel Villavicencio
Dedicated to our beloved teacher, Stefan Belov.
We grieve his untimely passing.
To him we dedicate the English edition of this atlas.
He showed us how to manage
the most difficult tasks in the field of angiology.
He taught us how to overcome loneliness
and how to defeat obscurantism with love, faith, and perseverance.
He led us to realize the critical difference between
simply getting good results and founding a new school of thought.
We hope that this atlas will contribute to the realization of his dream:
to systematize vascular malformations, to offer effective treatments,
and, finally, to expel angiodysplasias from the niche
of rare diseases for which no therapy is available.
Foreword

The field of congenital vascular malformations and the unfortunate patients that suffer from them will welcome this truly multidisciplinary international contribution to the study and treatment of a group of diseases that is gradually becoming better known, but not better liked, by the majority of our colleagues. Without question, the power of the internet with its access to worldwide medical literature, and the publication of complete issues of medical journals devoted to the subject of vascular malformations, have contributed to expanding knowledge and eliciting curiosity amongst physicians who some decades ago would not have wanted to deal with unusual, poorly understood and challenging diseases.

A group of authors from ten different countries, experts in their respective medical and surgical specialties, who have felt the pain of the many patients afflicted with vascular malformations, have made a combined effort to increase and update the growing knowledge of these diseases. The tremendous technological advances in non invasive as well as invasive diagnostic techniques, imaging, genetics, and therapeutic surgical and endovascular procedures, have given us new weapons with which to treat and improve the lives of many desperate patients afflicted by diseases that some years ago produced only sorrow, compassion and despair in their families and in the rare physicians who dared to tackle their problems.

Congenital vascular malformations exert a powerful and fascinating attraction in a small group of dedicated and compassionate physicians who see in these problems a challenge that is difficult to overcome. Often, the magnitude of the problem incites us to seek new avenues to solve it or, at least, to improve our patients’ suffering.

A great deal of progress has been made in the understanding and management of congenital vascular anomalies. These new advances are shared with other physicians so that they can find, through the pages of this book, new ideas on how to treat their patients and hopefully, the solution to their patients’ problems.

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Preface

When a curious tourist travels through an unknown country following a guidebook, at the end of his trip he may have a number of different feelings. If the land he visited was interesting and the guidebook brought him to the remarkable places and clearly explained the meaning of what he was seeing and how to move through the country, he may remain interested in his trip, love the new country and want to return in order to explore it more in detail. If the guidebook was unclear, did not give him the correct explanations or guide him to the best places, he will leave without an interest in the land, will lay down his guidebook and will not come back.

The goal of this atlas is to guide the reader through the difficult field of hemangiomas and vascular malformations, help him to understand them and give him answers to questions, mainly about practical approaches to these diseases. All the authors have made an effort to explain their topics in the simplest way with text and pictures.

If we succeed in our effort and this small atlas is appreciated by readers, we will be happy that we have accomplished the goal given to us by our teacher and friend, Professor Stefan Belov, who dedicated his life to the study of these diseases and strongly desired to publish an atlas to help colleagues understand hemangiomas and vascular malformations in order to propagate knowledge and possibilities for treatment. He passed away before he could see his idea become reality, but we hope that our efforts fulfil his wishes.

We thank all the authors who spent their time making this book a reality. Special thanks to all our friends at Springer-Verlag in Milan, and particularly Antonella Cerri and Alessandra Born.

R. Mattassi
D.A. Loose
M. Vaghi
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