Biliopancreatic Endoscopy
Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) was initially used for the diagnosis of biliary and pancreatic diseases in the last century. Even with the advent of new facilities and improvement of the techniques, ERCP is still considered to be an invasive and uncomfortable procedure. Nowadays, the method of ERCP is popularly applied to enlarge the papillary orifice for the removal of biliary and pancreatic stones, to relieve obstruction of distal bile duct or pancreatic duct by nasobiliary/nasopancreatic drainage or stenting, and to remove the premalignant tumor of the papilla. In the twenty-first century, the rights and safety of patients as well as the efficacy of clinical management are the basic requirements in the teaching hospital. To perform a good ERCP, it needs the experience of an endoscopist, to recognize the history of patients and available facilities, to be careful and patient during the procedure. A competent ERCPist should practice more than 200 successful procedures under the supervision of an experienced expert. However, a perfect ERCP simulation system is not available even today, and most of the trainees get their technical experiences initially from real patients. In addition, the budgets for medical care are not limitless particularly in countries with national health insurance such as Taiwan. The patients’ characteristics and techniques used for ERCP may have some differences between the Western and Eastern countries. How to choose the cost-effective and safe procedure to help patients is an important requisite for clinical practice and training programs. Endoscopic ultrasonography is a useful modality for the diagnosis and interventional treatment of biliary and pancreatic diseases, but it also requires special skills and experiences of endoscopists to complete the procedures.

I would like to appreciate our senior members of the Digestive Endoscopy Society of Taiwan for sharing their experiences in clinical practice and for summarizing the literatures on recent advances concerning biliopancreatic endoscopy. This book will help the readers to improve their basic technique and selection of the best method and facilities, and to provide a safe, effective medical service to their patients in the future.

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