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Book Review

Perry DJ, Pasi KJ: Hemostasis and Thrombosis Protocols, 368 pp, Totowa, New Jersey, Humana Press, Inc., 1999 ($89.50).

This is a reference manual on research and diagnostic techniques in the field of hemostasis and thrombosis. It is written by multiple experts from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. The majority of the text is devoted to contemporary nucleic acid approaches, but some sections also describe techniques for protein and cellular expression analysis.

The manual is divided into five parts. Part one is an introductory chapter that briefly summarizes the fundamental components of the hemostatic mechanism. Part two is a series of chapters that describe basic nucleic acid techniques that are applied in later chapters, such as the isolation, amplification, and sequencing of nucleic acids, as well as various methods for analyzing promoter regions. Part three, as well as some chapters within part four, discuss different screening methods for detecting genetic mutations, which can be applied to any gene. Part four contains numerous chapters that describe various nucleic acid, cellular expression, and protein-based methods that have been applied to analyze specific clotting factor deficiencies and hypercoagulable states. Part five discusses methods for the molecular biological analysis of platelet and megakaryocyte disorders.

Each chapter is presented in a recipe format so that the methods can be reproduced. All chapters are subdivided into sections for easy reading: introduction, materials, methods, and notes. The "notes" section provides useful caveats about experimental technique and data interpretation. The chapters on mutation detection in clotting factor deficiencies will be useful to hemostasis laboratories that are interested in carrier detection, prenatal diagnosis, or research. The chapters on von Willebrand factor multimer analysis, factor V Leiden mutation, and prothrombin G20210A mutation will be useful to hemostasis laboratories that want to set up these important diagnostic tests.

The criticisms are relatively minor. One of the mutation detection methods (chemical cleavage of mismatched base pairs) is first introduced in part four but would have been more appropriate in part three to provide consistency. The text would have benefited from careful editing to correct typographical errors found in several chapters. Some chapters lacked pictures of electrophoretic gels, which if present would have enhanced understanding of the material.

This manual does well at meeting its goals of providing a broad overview of techniques used in the analysis of hemostatic disorders and providing strategies for future problem solving. It will be of great utility to hemostasis laboratories that wish to advance their research or diagnostic capabilities.

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