
Preface

Our Current Edition

Although this is the second English edition of our hematology atlas, this edition is *completely new*. As an immediate sign of this change, there are now three authors. The completely updated visual presentation uses digital images, and the content is organized according to the most up-to-date morphological classification criteria.

In this new edition, our newly formed team of authors from Munich (the “Munich Group”) has successfully shared their knowledge with you. Heinz Diem and Torsten Haferlach are nationally recognized as lecturers of the diagnostics curriculum of the German Association for Hematology and Oncology.

Goals

Most physicians are fundamentally “visually oriented.” Apart from immediate patient care, the microscopic analysis of blood plays to this preference. This explains the delight and level of involvement on the part of practitioners in the pursuit of morphological analyses.

Specialization notwithstanding, the hematologist wants to preserve the opportunity to perform groundbreaking diagnostics in hematology for the general practitioner, surgeon, pediatrician, the MTA technician, and all medical support personnel. New colleagues must also be won to the cause. Utmost attention to the analysis of hematological changes is essential for a timely diagnosis.

Even before bone marrow cytology, cytochemistry, or immunocytochemistry, information based on the analysis of blood is of immediate relevance in the doctor’s office. It is central to the diagnosis of the diseases of the blood cell systems themselves, which make their presence known through changes in blood components.

The exhaustive quantitative and qualitative use of hematological diagnostics is crucial. Discussions with colleagues from all specialties and teaching experience with advanced medical students confirm its importance. In cases where a diagnosis remains elusive, the awareness of the next diagnostic step becomes relevant. Then, further investigation through bone marrow, lymph node, or organ tissue cytology can yield firm results. This pocket atlas offers the basic knowledge for the use of these techniques as well.

Organization

Reflecting our goals, the inductive organization proceeds from simple to specialized diagnostics. By design, we subordinated the description of the bone marrow cytology to the diagnostic blood analysis (CBC). However, we have responded to feedback from readers of the previous editions and have included the principles of bone marrow diagnostics and non-ambiguous clinical bone marrow findings so that frequent and relevant diagnoses can be quickly made, understood, or replicated.

The nosology and differential diagnosis of hematological diseases are presented to you in a tabular form. We wanted to offer you a pocketbook for everyday work, not a reference book. Therefore, morphological curiosities, or anomalies, are absent in favor of a practical approach to morphology. The cellular components of organ biopsies and exudates are briefly discussed, mostly as a reminder of the importance of these tests.

The images are consistently photographed as they normally appear in microscopy (magnification 100 or 63 with oil immersion lens, occasionally master-detail magnification objective 10 or 20). Even though surprising perspectives sometimes result from viewing cells at a higher magnification, the downside is that this by no means facilitates the recognition of cells using your own microscope.

Instructions for the Use of this Atlas

The organization of this atlas supports a systematic approach to the study of hematology (see Table of Contents). The index offers ways to answer detailed questions and access the hematological terminology with references to the main description and further citations.

The best way to become familiar with your pocket atlas is to first have a cursory look through its entire content. The images are accompanied by short legends. On the pages opposite the images you will find corresponding short descriptive texts and tables. This text portion describes cell phenomena and discusses in more detail further diagnostic steps as well as the diagnostic approach to disease manifestations.

Acknowledgments

Twenty years ago, Professor Herbert Begemann dedicated the foreword to the first edition of this hematology atlas. He acknowledged that—beyond cell morphology—this atlas aims at the clinical picture of patients. We are grateful for being able to continue this tradition, and for the impulses from our teachers and companions that make this possible.

We thank our colleagues: J. Rastetter, W. Kaboth, K. Lennert, H. Löffler, H. Heimpel, P.M. Reisert, H. Brücher, W. Enne, T. Binder, H.D. Schick, W. Hiddemann, D. Seidel.

Munich, January 2004

Harald Theml, Heinz Diem, Torsten Haferlach