

Preface

Functional disorders of the urinary tract are common and in many cases have major adverse effects on the quality of life of the afflicted patients. These include disorders of the ureters, the bladder, the urethra, the prostate and the pelvic floor. For a long time, only surgical approaches and conservative treatment could be offered for such disorders. The last two decades have seen an amazing proliferation of knowledge in the field of anatomy, physiology and pharmacology of the urinary tract. Several major new treatments have emerged from such research and are benefitting millions of patients. However, therapeutic needs remain and only a profound knowledge on the underlying tissue, cell and molecular processes is likely to provide novel treatments addressing such needs. Therefore, we are very happy that internationally leading experts have contributed to the writing of this book and we thank all of them for their efforts. Their combined insight provides a comprehensive overview of the state of knowledge regarding the pharmacology of the urinary tract. Therefore, we trust that this book will become a valuable source of information for basic and clinical researchers alike in a dynamically growing field.

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Karl-Erik Andersson
Martin C. Michel