
Updates in Hypertension and Cardiovascular Protection

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The aim of this series is to provide informative updates on both the knowledge and the clinical management of a disease that, if uncontrolled, can very seriously damage the human body and is still among the leading causes of death worldwide. Although hypertension is associated mainly with cardiovascular, endocrine, and renal disorders, it is highly relevant to a wide range of medical specialties and fields – from family medicine to physiology, genetics, and pharmacology. The topics addressed by volumes in the series *Updates in Hypertension and Cardiovascular Protection* have been selected for their broad significance and will be of interest to all who are involved with this disease, whether residents, fellows, practitioners, or researchers.

More information about this series at <http://www.springer.com/series/15049>

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Secondary Hypertension



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*In memory of Professor Alberto Zanchetti,
teacher and mentor of all of us.*

Preface

It is common belief that secondary forms of hypertension are rare whereas in 95% of patients the cause of high blood pressure is unknown, which is said, euphemistically, “essential.” Thus, many clinicians are reluctant to embark on expensive, time-consuming, and potentially risky diagnostic procedures that most of the times turn out negative. However, there is increasing evidence from epidemiological studies that the prevalence of secondary hypertension is much higher than previously thought accounting for 20–25% of all hypertensive patients, meaning that worldwide there are some 200 million people in whom the cause of high blood pressure is not recognized. There are additional, very good reasons for searching patients with secondary hypertension. First is that for equal blood pressure levels these patients are exposed to a greater risk of suffering major cardiovascular events than patients with essential hypertension and for this reason they require particular care. Second is that these patients are curable with appropriate interventions and liberated from the burden of a lifetime pharmacological therapy or, at least, have a chance to be treated with more specific and effective medications. Obviously for picking up patients with secondary hypertension, a good deal of clinical skill is required to appreciate the often vague and subtle symptoms and signs that characterize these individuals. A full comprehension of the mechanisms responsible for the development and maintenance of high blood pressure is also needed. This book was conceived to inform readers on the most updated advances in the epidemiological, pathophysiological, diagnostic, and therapeutic aspects of secondary hypertension provided by a group of the most respected European scholars in this field. We aim to offer an opportunity to expand readers’ knowledge in an intricate area of cardiovascular medicine hoping that the new acquisitions may be translated to a better treatment of the many patients with secondary hypertension.

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