Preface to the third edition

The last 5–6 years since the publication of the second edition of *Principles of Immunopharmacology* have seen several notable changes in our understanding of the immune system. Not least of these has been the expansion of the number of defined T cell subsets with the rapid appreciation of their roles in infectious and autoimmune diseases. In parallel, the spotlight has fallen increasingly on the contribution of sub-populations of dendritic cells and the recognition that these cells represent potential targets for drug therapy. These areas are given detailed attention in this third edition, together with a new chapter on pre- and probiotics and a greater emphasis on therapeutic biologicals, which are providing the major thrust in new immunomodulatory drug development. All other chapters have been updated by the authors, bringing the book in line with the latest progress in each field. The format of the textbook, with sections on immune mechanisms, diagnostics, therapeutic agents and immunotoxicology, a glossary of keywords and the collection of appendices, has been retained and illustrations have been improved. An introduction has been added, providing an overview of inflammation, the immune response and its pharmacological modification as a framework for the subsequent details given in each chapter. Most of these improvements have been made in response to comments from authors and readers, which we much appreciate.

Once again, we are very grateful to all the contributors for taking the time to revise or contribute new chapters. We are particularly grateful to Els Tange-Bijl for her organisational talent and expert co-ordination of the contacts with authors and her persistence in pressing them to deliver the manuscripts. We also thank Anke Brosius and her colleagues at Springer Basel for the professional desk editing of the final text and Dr. Hans-Detlef Klueber for sustaining the publisher’s support and guidance for the project. We hope you, the reader, find the final product informative and useful.

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