

Preface

Sarcoidosis is a disease with world-wide prevalence that affects all races, ethnic groups, individuals of all ages, and both sexes. The disease may affect any organ. Its severity may range from a radiographic or laboratory abnormality detected in a patient with no symptoms to a relentlessly progressive disease that is potentially life threatening. Despite the awareness of sarcoidosis as a specific disease entity for nearly one and one-half centuries, there is still no standard method of diagnosis, treatment approach, method of follow-up evaluation, or method to reliably predict prognosis.

Because sarcoidosis is a relatively rare disease, few clinicians have extensive clinical experience in its management. Furthermore, medical evidence concerning the clinical approach to sarcoidosis is scarce. Therefore, clinicians typically lack the necessary tools to make reliable treatment decisions concerning sarcoidosis patients.

The lung is the most common organ involved with sarcoidosis. Pulmonary manifestations of sarcoidosis include asymptomatic radiographic abnormalities, granulomatous inflammation of airways, and/or the lung interstitium causing pulmonary symptoms and fibrocystic disease that may result in severe pulmonary dysfunction and pulmonary hypertension.

This book will serve as a valuable resource for clinicians concerning the care of the pulmonary sarcoidosis patient. The focus of this book concerns issues of diagnosis, management, and prognosis of the disease. The authors are all clinicians with extensive experience in caring for these patients. Although they drew on their own expertise, the authors were encouraged to focus on the clinical data that are available. I hope that this book will serve as a practical guide for clinicians and thus improve the care of sarcoidosis patients.

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