Preface

Neuroendocrine tumors (NETs) are becoming increasingly recognized by both healthcare professionals and patients as being more common than previously recognized. This increased awareness has resulted from increased educational efforts on the part of several societies and patient-supported, nonprofit organizations. We owe much thanks to these educational efforts from dedicated health professionals, patients, and advocates. An increase in federal funding and research support from several nonprofit groups such as Caring for Carcinoid Foundation, the North American Neuroendocrine Tumor Society, and the European Neuroendocrine Tumor Society have positively impacted the field of research. Several pharmaceutical companies, including Novartis, Pfizer, and Ipsen Pharmaceuticals Inc., have provided clinical research funding for new drugs to treat neuroendocrine tumors. As a result of these combined efforts and as reflected in this book, new imaging techniques such as the DOTATATE-Gallium 68 and FDG-PET have improved our ability to detect small, previously unrecognized NETs. We have refined our endoscopic imaging techniques to permit extirpation by endoscopic mucosal resection of small intraluminal NETs such as gastric and rectal carcinoids. The pathology of NETs has been refined which impacts the staging of disease through using molecular markers. We now have a greater understanding of the genetics of NETs, an area which will likely expand in the future. With these improved imaging and histopathological techniques, our surgical colleagues have a greater awareness of tumor staging preceding a planned resection procedure. A greater understanding of the receptor and signaling pathways of NETs has yielded directed chemotherapy and radiopharmaceuticals to treat regional or distant metastases. This book includes 12 chapters that cover these important clinical areas of research and development and has been written by experts in their respective fields. It is my hope that this will be the start of increased awareness for junior investigators and seasoned clinicians to stimulate improvements in research design and therapies which will ultimately translate to improved clinical outcomes for patients with NETs.

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Management of Pancreatic Neuroendocrine Tumors
Pisegna, J.R. (Ed.)
2015, X, 167 p. 28 illus., 20 illus. in color., Hardcover
ISBN: 978-1-4939-1797-6