Preface

Pain relief has been a major goal of humanity for centuries. A recent survey conducted by National Institute of Health (NIH) estimated that chronic pain syndromes afflicted one-third of the American population and that over 50 million were either partially or totally disabled. As a result of chronic pain, well over 550 million work days were lost, which, together with health-care costs and payments for compensation, litigation, and malpractice, totals nearly $100 billion annually. The cost of human suffering is even greater than the economic impact. It is a distressing fact that millions of patients suffering from persistent pain develop serious physical and affective disorders.

For decades, numerous scientists have tried to carry out extensive research to uncover the mystery of pain and to develop effective therapies for reducing pain. Such efforts have significantly improved our understanding of pain and have led to the discoveries of new drugs for pain treatment in humans and animals as well. Our current understanding of pain and the underlying mechanisms of pain have been revealed mostly by experimentation using animal models due to the severe limitations of using human subjects in pain research. We write this book in an attempt to provide readers with a consolidated review of the animal models available for pain research. In preparing this book, we have tried to capture the diversity of animal models that are used to investigate pain mechanisms, ranging from surgical incision to mechanical compression and from spinal cord injury to cutaneous/local inflammation.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all the authors who contributed to this book.

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