This is the fifth edition of the book since 1992. A lot of changes have been made over the years, but the biggest transformation came with the fourth edition in 2005: many new chapters, easy overview, and core messages providing all the clinical photos and diagrams. All these advantages have been retained for the fifth edition, where an extensive update of chapters has been made including new versions and authors for several topics.

Contact dermatitis is one of the major problems in occupational skin diseases. This is reflected in the book, where new chapters on occupational contact dermatitis have been written: a general chapter, which gives an overview of the subject, provides clear definitions and gives valuable guidance for the investigation of patients suspected of occupational contact dermatitis; followed by specific chapters on three high-risk professions.

The popular dictionary of contact allergens and lists of patch test concentrations have been expanded and provide the tool for evidence-based investigation and information of patients with contact dermatitis.

Contact dermatitis is a frequent, disabling and expensive disease. This brings both primary and secondary prevention in focus of research. A solid basis has already been established for intervention on a personal, organizational and regulatory level. The significant level of knowledge in these areas is summarised in three new chapters, which also cover therapy, a previous somewhat neglected subject in the book. Other chapters on different aspects of prevention have gone through a significant updation and revision. Basic understanding of pathophysiology within the fields of genes, skin barrier and chemistry has taken a leap forward and these new developments are reflected in new and former chapters of the book.

With this edition, Torkil Menné has resigned from the editorial group. Torkil Menné was one of the initiators of this textbook and has been part of the editorial board since then. The editors would like to express their sincere thanks to Torkil Menné for his invaluable contributions to the book and to the field of contact dermatitis over many years.

The fourth edition was a great success, and even though it seemed an impossible task to surpass it, we think we have done so with the fifth edition. This has, of course, only been possible with the help of the many great contributors and the editors are very grateful to each and every one of them.

Last but not the least, we would like to thank Springer-Verlag for their excellent support to this project.

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