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Guest Editor

Twenty years after the original isolation of *Helicobacter pylori*, the organism continues to excite researchers and clinicians alike because of its amazing biochemical properties and multiple interactions with its human host. This latest, two-volume edition, of *Gastroenterology Clinics of North America* became necessary because of continued advances in diagnosis, treatment, and basic science of the spiral organism.

All articles are up-to-date, original, and previously unpublished reviews by world-renowned experts in the field.

With half the population of the world still infected with *H. pylori*, this two-volume issue will be an important reference source for those interested in understanding the epidemiology and those planning future studies related to diagnosis and treatment. Regarding diagnosis, the articles each were written by experts of their own methodology, often by the inventors of the respective diagnostic tests described.

In areas where *H. pylori* is common, gastric cancer is often a public health problem. We have dedicated several articles to various aspects of carcinogenesis and gastric cancer and its epidemiology. These will be of special interest to Japanese investigators, because much of the good data from Asia actually arise from Japanese studies where Koch's postulates now have been fulfilled for gastric cancer in the Mongolian gerbil.

Finally, most clinicians are curious and enthusiastic about new molecular advances in studies of epidemiology, virulence, and pathogenicity for *H. pylori*. To satisfy these readers, we have included authoritative but clearly explained articles describing the role of the various pathogenicity islands and virulence factors that are often discussed in scientific meetings.

As a result of our previous publications on diagnosis and treatment of *H. pylori*, millions of patients have been cured of their peptic ulcer disease, so that peptic ulcer from *H. pylori* is becoming uncommon in some Western countries. This allows us to focus more effectively on the basic science components of *H. pylori*, assisted by important advances, such as publication of the complete *H. pylori* genome sequence map. Further advances should see simple and effective ways of diagnosing, treating, and preventing (with vaccination) *H. pylori* in future generations in Western and developing countries.

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