
This is an excellent book in every respect. It contains 19 chapters in three broad sections with the following headings: the genetic and environmental factors affecting insulin action, pathophysiology of insulin resistance and clinical syndromes associated with insulin resistance. The relatively concise chapters are written by a well-chosen panel of experts, and extremely well referenced. The chapters generally give well balanced but critical overviews of their complex and rapidly moving subjects. Some chapters, however, seek to convince us of a particular hypothesis and in that sense are controversial; the editors are to be commended in this respect.

In addition to predictable chapters such as those discussing genetics, obesity, physical activity, cardiovascular disease etc., novel aspects of insulin resistance are also incorporated such as discussions on fetal programming, the relationship between insulin action and endothelial function, and the recently demonstrated links between insulin resistance and polycystic ovary syndrome. Therefore, the book is up to date and comprehensive and the editors are correct in their statement that ‘the importance of insulin resistance in human disease far transcends its role in the aetiology of type 2 diabetes’.

I would strongly recommend this book to anyone with an interest in research in the fields of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and obesity. In particular, this book would be a very useful starting point for PhD and MD students undertaking research on any aspect of insulin resistance. It would therefore serve as a very useful addition not only to Diabetes departments, but also to departments of Nutrition, Cardiology, and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

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