Introduction

This is the third monograph in a series of supplements dedicated to the epidemiology, methods of diagnosis, therapeutic considerations, and preventive strategies of venous thromboembolic (VTE) disease. The Society for Vascular Medicine and Biology (SVMB), the only professional medical organization representing all physician groups caring for patients with vascular disease, conceived and implemented this series in association with Circulation. The options for diagnosis and therapy continue to evolve; therefore, it is our goal to offer a single comprehensive and up-to-date resource for physicians who are responsible for the care of these complex patients.

For each monograph the SVMB has chosen a guest editor who is widely recognized for expertise in this field. In addition to review by the guest editor, a combined editorial board comprised of members of the SVMB and Circulation is then asked to review each manuscript for accuracy and appropriateness. The guest editor for the third edition in the series is Jeffrey Weitz, MD, a world-renowned expert in the field of thrombosis and hemostasis. Dr Weitz has called on an esteemed group of authors to provide an in-depth review of the treatment strategies for venous thromboembolism. An evaluation of unfractionated heparin, low-molecular-weight heparins, and emerging therapies, including oral direct thrombin inhibitors, is contained within. The appropriate duration of antithrombotic therapy, currently an area of controversy, is addressed. Discussions regarding the alternate methods of management, including thrombolytic therapy, surgical venous thrombectomy, percutaneous mechanical thrombectomy, and vena cava filters are also included.

This monograph marks the third issue of the series. The first monograph focused on epidemiology and risk factors of VTE. The second was centered on diagnostic approaches for patients with VTE. This third monograph deals with the management of the disease. The fourth and final installment will be dedicated to the prophylaxis of VTE. There are few other cardiovascular disorders which have such effective preventive methods available. Because of the varied risk profiles and complications of the prophylactic therapies themselves, physicians must be well informed to make appropriate treatment decisions for their high-risk patients.

We hope this series of monographs is helpful and offers a comprehensive resource for primary care physicians and cardiovascular specialists alike. The mission of the SVMB is to promote excellence in diagnosis, management, education, and research for both physicians and patients in the field of vascular medicine, thereby improving both the longevity and quality of our patients’ lives.

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