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Foreword



Chronic pancreatitis remains an enigmatic disease. Although genetic predispositions have been identified, its pathogenesis remains poorly defined. Likewise, the myriad of treatment options suggest that we have still not found the best approach to treating its primary clinical manifestation, intractable pain. Despite this there continue to be advances in both our understanding of the pathophysiology and in approaches to its treatment. In this issue of *Current Problems in Surgery*, Drs. Thomas K. Maatman and Nicholas J. Zyromski from the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis share their expertise in a masterful perspective on this topic entitled, "Chronic Pancreatitis." They begin with sections on epidemiology and pathophysiology, including a discussion of genetic factors. They then discuss clinical presentation and diagnostic evaluation including the use of imaging and endoscopy. Subsequent sections cover various treatment options, including pharmacologic management and endoscopic approaches. Surgical options, ranging from simple pancreatic drainage to resection and even total pancreatectomy and islet cell transplantation, are each covered in significant detail. Their discussion focuses on recent advances, summarizing the data with appropriate clarity. This superb treatise is a significant addition to the literature on this subject and should become a resource not only for surgeons in training but for all practitioners caring for patients with this difficult disease.

Stanley W. Ashley, MD
Editor in Chief