Preface

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Jonathan M. Zenilman, MD
Guest Editor

It has been a privilege to edit this issue of *Infectious Disease Clinics of North America*. The field of sexually transmitted infections has been characterized by newly emerging epidemiological trends, an increased appreciation of behavioral risks, rapid advances in diagnostic testing, and new clinical syndromes. In this volume, contributors who are epidemiologists, behavioral scientists, clinicians, and laboratory scientists have contributed articles illustrating the highlights in these areas. We have developed the articles which would be of interest to the practicing clinician as well as the clinician who has an interest in public health, with the intent of providing an overall background to STDs and also imparting some useful clinical skills and information. Our authors are expert clinicians and epidemiologists from the United States and the United Kingdom.

In the first article, Bill Miller reviews the epidemiology of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the United States, focusing on recent large-scale population-based behavioral surveys, which have the potential to provide accurate population-based information on STD incidence and prevalence. Sevgi Aral, a well known behavioral researcher from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) writes on important demographic trends which have the tremendous potential to impact STD risks, especially changes in society which impacts sexuality and therefore risk of STDs. She has done so in a very digestible format for busy clinicians who often don’t have the opportunity to see this type of information in print. Kevin Fenton, an international expert on public health surveillance and on STDs in gay men, discusses the recent troubling increased rates of
syphilis and other STDs in gay men, and compares the Western Europe and the United States experience. In the clinical realm, Jeannie Marrazzo discusses the current approaches to the diagnoses and management of mucopurulent cervicitis, an often vexing clinical problem because many cases do not have an easily identifiable cause. Khalil Ghanem reviews the current and rapidly moving epidemiology of quinolone resistant gonorrhea and its implications for public health and for therapy. Charlotte Gaydos reviews the new diagnostic tests which have emerged in the past decade for a diagnosis of gonorrhea and chlamydia and its impact on clinical practice, focusing on the movement of diagnostic testing from the clinician’s office into field settings. Jack Sobel reviews bacterial vaginosis and trichomonas, building on his incredible wealth of knowledge in this area and providing a format for clinicians to evaluate vaginal discharge in a logical and consistent manner. Jonathan Ross, from the United Kingdom, reviews the role of *Mycoplasma genitalium* in the pathogenesis of non gonococcal, urethritis, and proposes that this may be an organism in pelvic inflammatory disease.

Steve Reynolds and Thomas Quinn review the STD–HIV interaction, focusing on recent data which implicates herpes as an important issue in that interaction. Drs. Raj Patel and Anne Rompalo review recent data and clinical trials in the most effective ways of managing patients who have clinical genital herpes and their partners, emphasizing the new data that suggest that treatment of infected individuals may be an approach to preventing infection in their partners. Pattie Gravitt, a human papillomavirus (HPV) basic scientist and epidemiologist, and Roxanne Jamshidi, who is a gynecologist, reviewed the clinical approach to managing cervical HPV infection and the role of new diagnostic testing, such as the sensitive HPV assays for HPV and their role in clinical management. Charlie Ebel and Terry Warren, both experts in counseling provide a structured counseling approach for patients with herpes and HPV infection. Counseling in particular has been a clinical conundrum, because counseling patients about a chronic viral infection in an office setting can be quite challenging.

The last part of the volume deals with selected programmatic and scientific advances. Larry Stanberry and Susan Rosenthal review progress in STD vaccines, focusing mostly on new viral vaccines, specifically HPV and herpes simplex. Kathleen Irwin and Zsakeba Henderson from the CDC review the approach to STDs in managed care environments, and how to utilize the managed care environment for the most effective patient-based STD control as well as population-based STD control issues. Matthew Golden from the University of Washington reviews outreach approaches partner management issues related to STD. He builds on his having tremendous experience in developing innovative partner approaches, including partner delivered therapy, and the enlistment of pharmacies to provide STD treatment to potentially infected partners. Finally, I review the behavioral intervention literature on what works and what does not work, with a critical evaluation of
how to approach behavioral interventions from the standpoint of the clinician and trying to understand the advantages and limits of the behavioral intervention approach.

Because of space constraints, we could not address other current and important topics. For example, we did not discuss the current clinical management of pelvic inflammatory disease or nongonococcal urethritis. These topics will potentially be addressed in a future volume.

This project would not have happened without my assistants Lin McGrogan and Marci Fenloch, and Carin Davis, from Elsevier, who continually provided encouragement.

I hope you enjoy this volume and that it helps you in clinical practice and in the public health management of your patients.

Jonathan M. Zenilman, MD
Infectious Diseases Division
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
4940 Eastern Avenue B-3 North
Baltimore, MD 21224, USA

E-mail address: jzenilm1@jhmi.edu