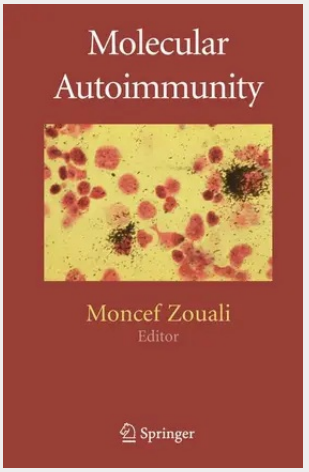
Zouali

Molecular Autoimmunity



2004 marks the 100th anniversary of the first description of the autoimmune disease paroxysmal cold hemoglobinuria, a rare hemolytic disorder, by Julius Donath and Karl Landsteiner. After a century of research, the list of autoimmune diseases has become impressive. With a prevalence of approximately 5% of the world-wide population, these chronic, debilitating conditions affect almost every major organ of the body and, for reasons that remain unclear, are much more prevalent in woman than in men. Despite our rapidly expanding knowledge of the cellular and molecular pathways that govern a normal immune response, deciphering the precise etiology of autoimmune diseases remains an important challenge. Over the last few years, our understanding of the pathogenesis of autoimmune diseases has improved rapidly, leading to the emergence of elegant immunointervention strategies.

Molecular Autoimmunity illustrates how cutting-edge research is continuing to advance our understanding of autoimmune disease mechanisms and identifies novel therapeutic targets that provide a hope for effective future treatments. This volume contains a selected number of exciting advances in unraveling autoimmune reactions, and the resulting new armory of experimental immunotherapies that may lead to new ways of controlling autoimmune reactions.

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