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Clinical Urology and Basic Renal Research— Introductory Remarks

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The past 10 to 20 years in clinical urology have been characterized by remarkable evolution of new techniques and by refinements of older methods for diagnosis and treatment. This rapid progress had resulted in more urologic disorders becoming amenable to treatment and, for certain conditions, shortening of the hospital stay. There are grounds for optimism concerning future developments. However, the inevitable involvements with advanced technology and scientific methods have increased the demands made on the skills of clinicians.

Because urology is such a comprehensive field for research, it is necessary to focus on areas of special interest and, because such questions must be penetrated in depth, research makes heavy demands on resources. Moreover, clinical questions as a rule overlap several areas of the research field, thus underlining the importance of linking basic biologic research to clinical urology. The aspects which require extensive interdepartmental collaboration include pathology, virology, haematology, immunology and physiology.

In the studies here presented we have used basic biologic methods, but have dealt with clinical questions. Collaboration has been particularly close with the renal research groups at the Biomedical Centre of Uppsala University. Many of the investigations in the past ten years have concerned preservation of kidneys in connection with renal transplantation and acute renal failure. In practical terms, these collaborative projects have led to some changes in clinical routines.

The pathophysiology of unilateral nephrectomy has increasingly attracted interest in recent years with regard to the possibility of renal glomerular damage as a result of glomerular hyperfiltration. Questions concerning ureteral obstruction and relief of the associated pain, and the basic physiologic regulation of that pain, have also been studied at our department. The importance of renal function in the development and maintenance of arterial hypertension is another subject towards the understanding of which considerable effort has recently been directed.

Some of the papers presented in this issue are examples of our strivings towards expansion of knowledge in clinical urology with utilization of basic medical research.

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