Although tumors of the thymus gland are rare, they are not infrequently encountered by thoracic oncologic specialists. Thymic tumors have been managed for many decades using clinicians’ anecdotal experience because their rarity has prohibited the performance of high quality clinical studies. Over the past decade, however, the landscape has begun to change for two major reasons. First, the development of formal research organizations dedicated to producing clinically applicable data for the everyday management of patients with thymic tumors has accelerated interest in these tumors. These organizations include the Chinese Alliance for Research in Thymomas (ChART), the Japanese Association for Research on the Thymus (JART) as well as the International Thymic Malignancy Interest Group (ITMIG). All of these organizations bring together physicians and researchers, working collaboratively, to try to answer clinically relevant questions regarding the management of patients with thymic tumors. Second, these organizations have dedicated resources and energy to develop multi-institutional databases (in the case of ITMIG, a multinational database) to serve as repositories of high quality patient data to be used for research purposes. Through this pooling of data and collaboration, research involving data from thousands of patients is now being performed with regularity, resulting in tangible benefits for patients.

This book represents a compilation of manuscripts that reflect recent contributions to the literature regarding thymic tumors. Several of these studies have resulted from analyses performed using the aforementioned large datasets compiled by investigators from all over the world, while others represent literature reviews by recognized experts in the field of thymic tumors, or single institutional experiences. Topics range from treatment strategies for complex cases to the technical aspects of cutting edge surgical techniques. Caregivers will find this collection of manuscripts an invaluable resource when involved in the management of patients with any type of thymic tumor, regardless of their specialty.

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