

# Book Review

## An Atlas of Hair Pathology With Clinical Correlations

Written by Leonard C. Sperling, MD, COL, MC, USA  
©2003, Parthenon Publishing Group, New York, New York. 158 pages.

A review by Richard S. Mizuguchi, MD

In his atlas for the dermatopathology of hair, Leonard C. Sperling, MD, begins his preface with the description, "This is the first comprehensive presentation of the microscopic pathology of hair disease." Given the complexity of diagnosing and treating patients with various forms of alopecia, clinicians rely heavily on the interpretation of their specimens by dermatopathologists. In this respect, an atlas dedicated to hair pathology is essential for all dermatopathologists and pathologists who diagnose skin diseases.

The book is written as a reference text, primer, and atlas. The first 6 chapters are dedicated to the introduction and review of histopathologic hair anatomy and the basic clinical dermatology of hair. Dr. Sperling describes basic terminologies and shows clinical and histopathologic examples to reinforce the text. He also links the vocabulary of distinctive and/or critical histologic features with the associated disease.

The remaining 22 chapters are dedicated to common clinical types of alopecia seen by clinicians and dermatopathologists. Each chapter contains a brief synopsis of the clinical disease and representative clinical photographs. Dr. Sperling also provides

an analysis of hair pathology in each chapter including numerous color plates of the scalp histopathology. The pathologic and clinical photomicrographs are well chosen and of superb quality. A synopsis of each disease concludes each chapter and is presented as a bulleted list of the histological findings pertinent to each disease. References are cited at the end of each chapter.

The author describes both scarring and nonscarring alopecia in his atlas. However, if you are looking for a book focusing on genodermatoses affecting the hair shafts, this not the appropriate resource. This atlas focuses on the various acquired forms of alopecia instead. In this respect, it is an invaluable tool for both dermatologists and dermatopathologists interested in hair loss.

Hair disease is often difficult to diagnose clinically, as well as dermatopathologically. The clinical pathologic correlation is useful in many cases, and Dr. Sperling effectively combines these 2 aspects of hair disease through the use of his extensive collection of histological specimens and clinical photographs. For a list price of \$109.95, this book is a helpful reference tool for clinicians interested in the histopathology of hair.