Preface by the Editors of this Volume

Laboratory Diagnosis in Neurology gives a practice-oriented overview of the diagnostic relevance of current laboratory tests for neurological diseases and syndromes. The book is intended to provide clinicians and laboratory medical staff with information about the basics of analytical laboratory procedures, the range of indications, and the interpretation of laboratory findings. Also covered are important factors that may interfere with tests.

The book has been designed to supplement other books on laboratory diagnosis (see references in this book) as well as textbooks of neurology. In addition to cerebrospinal fluid analysis, which is of central importance to neurology as a medical specialty, the book also describes laboratory parameters that have relevance for neurological diagnosis in general. The book was written by clinical chemists and neurochemists together with neurologists and psychiatrists with experience in laboratory analysis.

The first part of the book explains the basic methods of cerebrospinal fluid analysis and of laboratory analysis in general. This overview of relevant methodological principles is unique and gives the physician important information about the classification of equipment and procedures, and about how to recognize differences in the qualities of similar methods that are of relevance for the interpretation of their results.

The second part describes the relative importance and diagnostic validity of laboratory findings for specific clinical disorders. The practice-oriented structure of the laboratory integrated cerebrospinal fluid diagnostic report, which collects the individual data of the medical report and presents them in the form of disease-related patterns, appears at the end, together with a tabulation of the most important reference values.

Our thanks are due to the late Prof. Klaus Felgenhauer for suggesting and supporting the writing of this book, and to all the authors and coauthors for their enthusiastic work on individual chapters. We thank Ms. Ursula Vielkind for the professional translation of the book and Mr. Martin Kortenhaus for substantial editing. We also thank the team at Thieme, particularly Ms. Gabriele Kuhn-Giovannini and Mr. Andreas Schabert for excellent collaboration and their helpful and constructive efforts regarding the design and printing of this book.

We would greatly appreciate critical comments from our readers.

Brigitte Wildemann
Patrick Oschmann
Hansotto Reiber