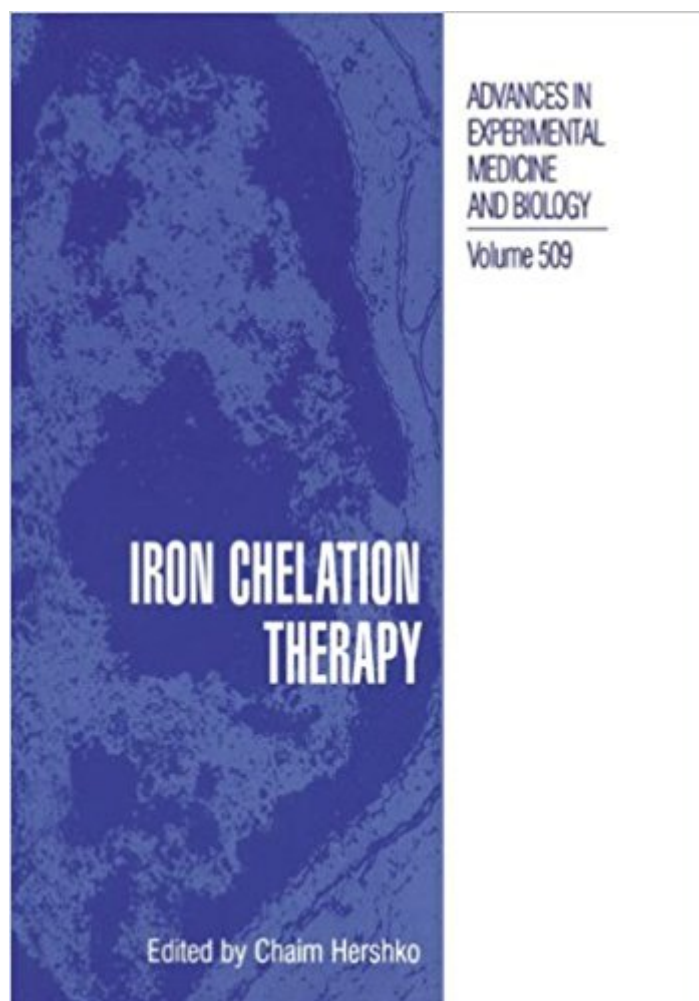


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Iron Chelation Therapy (Advances In Experimental Medicine And Biology)



Synopsis

Within the last few years, iron research has yielded exciting new insights into the understanding of normal iron homeostasis. However, normal iron physiology offers little protection from the toxic effects of pathological iron accumulation, because nature did not equip us with effective mechanisms of iron excretion. Excess iron may be effectively removed by phlebotomy in hereditary hemochromatosis, but this method cannot be applied to chronic anemias associated with iron overload. In these diseases, iron chelating therapy is the only method available for preventing early death caused mainly by myocardial and hepatic iron toxicity. Iron chelating therapy has changed the quality of life and life expectancy of thalassemic patients. However, the high cost and rigorous requirements of deferoxamine therapy, and the significant toxicity of deferiprone underline the need for the continued development of new and improved orally effective iron chelators. Such development, and the evolution of improved strategies of iron chelating therapy require better understanding of the pathophysiology of iron toxicity and the mechanism of action of iron chelating drugs. The timeliness of the present volume is underlined by several significant developments in recent years. New insights have been gained into the molecular basis of aberrant iron handling in hereditary disorders and the pathophysiology of iron overload (Chapters 1-5).

Book Information

Series: Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology (Book 509)

Hardcover: 277 pages

Publisher: Springer; 2002 edition (January 31, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0306467852

ISBN-13: 978-0306467851

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.7 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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