

## Volume preface

Light has been used to cure various diseases for centuries. However it is only recently that a new medical field has arisen under the name of photodynamic therapy (PDT), also called photochemotherapy. This modality, initially devoted to cancer care, is now also used for cancer diagnosis and the treatment of various diseases of vascular origins.

Photodynamic therapy had for a long time been confined to laboratories simply because the sensitizers used could not be protected. It then slowly emerged as a promising treatment technique in various clinical fields. The PDT story is emblematic of difficulties faced by new technologies. Several scientific organisations played a major role gathering scientists to help in PDT development. Among them is the European Society for Photobiology, ESP, and it is not surprising that it supported this PDT book. It appeared necessary to us to sum up not all the knowledge but the knowledge really required to understand what PDT is. Not all sensitizers are cited and neither are all the PDT applications, but through the examples given one can begin to understand PDT or imagine new PDT applications. This is the purpose of this comprehensive book, which also provides pertinent references to aid in understanding the subject and the safe treatment of patients. I asked to some famous authors to contribute to this book not only for their knowledge in this field but also for the ability that I personally noticed to easily explain complicated things. I hope that readers will find within these pages all they need to start or teach PDT. I wish that they will have as much pleasure as I have to work in this very fascinating field.

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