

Comment

The cycle of 7 articles published in this issue of “Postępy Nauk Medycznych” is devoted to life-threatening states in gastroenterology and hepatology.

Two articles relate to bleeding peptic ulcer and esophageal varices. These are the most common causes of acute bleeding from the upper gastrointestinal tract faced by internists and surgeons. The articles on the management of the bleeding are intended for them.

Acute pancreatitis and liver failure are among the diseases with serious prognosis. Standards of diagnosis and treatment of these diseases are subject to a frequent change. Management of these states, as described in the relevant articles, are consistent with the current standards in other European countries.

Other articles cover diseases of the large intestine. Diverticular disease of the colon is one of the most common diseases of the large intestine in the elderly. Main threat, however, is caused by complications of this disease. The type of these complications and their treatment are described by surgeons who treat most of the patients with abscesses, perforations, obstruction or hemorrhage that are associated with colon diverticular disease.

The subject of the next article is severe *ulcerative colitis* – a disease requiring intensive treatment, preferably in a gastroenterology center associated with surgical department specialized in the treatment of diseases of the large intestine. Shared care of patients with fulminant *colitis ulcerosa* is one of the conditions for success in the treatment of this condition, which often means saving the life of the patient.

The cycle is closed with an article devoted to the *Clostridium difficile* infection. This disease can also pose a threat to life, especially that the incidence and severity of these infections are steadily growing. The article discusses the principles of diagnosis and treatment of *Clostridium difficile* infection, and how to prevent the spread of this bacteria.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that reading the articles of the presented cycle will be especially useful for physicians on internist or surgical duties.

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