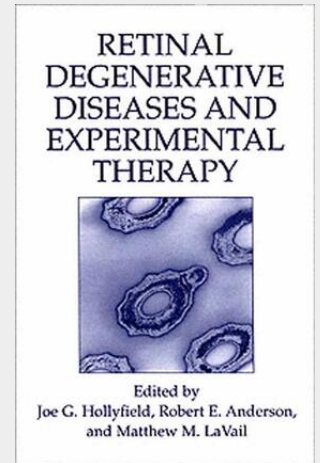


Retinal Degenerative Diseases and Experimental Therapy

To create a forum for scientists and clinicians interested in degenerative retinal diseases, we began in 1984 to organize a biennial symposium on Retinal Degeneration as a satellite meeting of the International Congress of Eye Research. The timing and varying location of these meetings provides an important assembly for investigators from throughout the world to convene for presentation of their new findings on the causes and potential therapies for degenerative retinal disorders. The VIII International Symposium on Retinal Degeneration was held from July 28-25, 1998, at the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten in Schluchsee, a small town in the Black Forest of southwestern Germany. Most of the participants in this meeting contributed to this volume, and we are appreciative of the efforts of each author in making this publication possible. The research presented at the meeting, and described in this proceedings volume, reflects a strong emphasis on the molecular genetic approach to understanding these disorders. Several of the papers provide important new insights into the mechanism of photoreceptor degeneration and cell death. A number of the studies are targeted at retarding or reversing the degeneration process. Included for the first time are presentations from all the principal laboratories involved in the field of visual prostheses-implant (chip) technology-in which investigations are targeted at restoring vision in eyes that have lost photoreceptor cells. A variety of diagnostic, clinical, histopathological, and physiological assessments of retinal degeneration in patients are also included.

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