Preface

Lymphedema Management

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Lymphedema is a common, chronic, and debilitating condition affecting up to 250 million people worldwide. In the Western world, lymphedema predominantly occurs as a sequelae of the treatment of cancer, in particular breast cancer, where over one third of patients are affected. Despite its prevalence, our understanding of the pathophysiology underlying the condition is incomplete, and a cure remains elusive. A rapidly growing body of evidence supports the effectiveness of modern surgical techniques in ameliorating the long-term disability and functional impairment inflicted by lymphedema on the lives of those affected. The mainstream acceptance of the efficacy of modern treatments for lymphedema, particularly the growing field of super microsurgery, has propelled the surgical management of lymphedema to the forefront of Plastic Surgery.

This issue of *Seminars in Plastic Surgery* showcases the state-of-the-art of the management of lymphedema. We would like to

express our gratitude to all of the invited expert authors from around the world who have made this issue possible. The issue aims to provide a global, although not exhaustive, review of the historical approaches to treatment for lymphedema. Topics, including recent advances in understanding of the anatomy of the lymphatic system and the lymphosome concept, diagnosis, and staging; non-operative treatment; the latest developments in surgical techniques; and cutting-edge developments in therapies for the condition, enable in-depth understanding of these advances from these leading authorities in the field.

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