

## 18. Vasculitis

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize and understand the pathophysiology of vasculitis as it relates to the size of the vessels involved.
2. Understand the diagnostic approaches relating to the various vasculitides, particularly with regard to tissue vs. serologic diagnosis.
3. Understand the various therapeutic options in treating vasculitis, particularly with regard to the implementation of steroid and/or cytotoxic therapy.
4. Recognize the various non-vasculitic diseases that mimic systemic vasculitis.

### SUMMARY:

1. Primary vasculitis represents a diverse group of diseases whose common feature is an inflammatory or autoimmune response directly targeting the vessel wall of involved vasculature.
2. Both cell-mediated and antibody-mediated processes participate in the autoimmune response causing tissue destruction in vasculitis.
3. The result of the vasculitic process is either vessel stenosis causing end organ ischemia or aneurysm formation potentially leading to localized hemorrhage or intravascular thrombosis.
4. The intensity of immunosuppression in treating vasculitic diseases is dependent upon the organ(s) involved, as well as the prognosis and anticipated chronicity of the disease process.