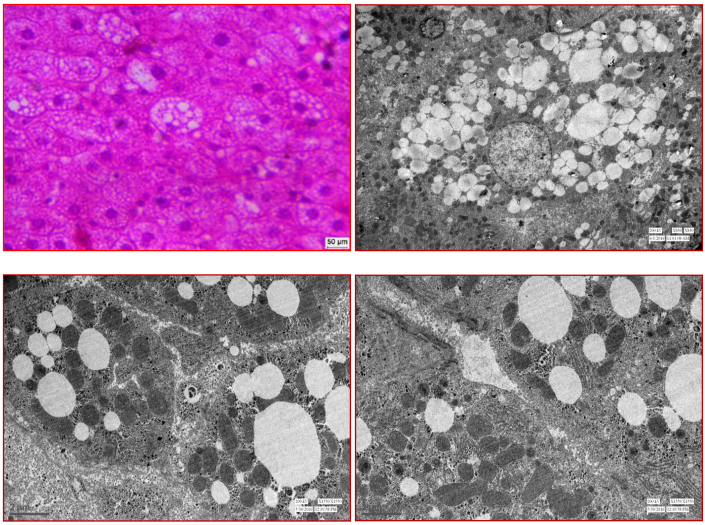
A Handbook on

Hepatotoxicity



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A Handbook on Hepatotoxicity

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Published by:
Poddar Publication
Tara Nagar, Chittupur, BHU
Varanasi - 221005
Ph: 0542-2366370, Mob. 09415390515
Email: poddarfoundation@gmail.com

Second Edition : **2024**

Price: Rs. 900/-

ISBN: 978-93-84817-00-8

Composing by:
Kumar Graphic
Delhi-110032

Printer:
Kumar Graphic
Shahadra, Delhi-110032

Contents

Chapters

Page no

Chapter 1

An Introduction to Toxicology

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Any substance that may elicit harmful effects on living beings on its exposure is defined as poison and the branch of science that deals with poisons is known as Toxicology. The exact meaning of the term toxicology is "the study of poisons." The root word toxic is a Latin word toxicus (which means poisonous), and Greek term toxikón (poisons into which arrows were dipped). Toxic, toxin, toxican, toxicity and toxicology are few interrelated definitions that reflect this expanded scope of the science of toxicology.

Toxic: having the characteristic of producing an undesirable or adverse health effect.

Toxin: any toxicant produced by an organism naturally (floral or faunal, including bacteria).

Toxicant: any substance that causes a harmful (or adverse) effect when comes in contact with a living organism at a sufficiently high concentration.

Toxicity: any toxic or adverse effect that a chemical or physical agent produces within a living organism.

Toxicology: is the science that deals with the study of the adverse effects (toxicities) of chemicals or physical agents, which may be