

Targeted Therapy for Cancer

K. Syrigos & K. Harrington, editors

Oxford University Press, 2003

ISBN: 0-19-850896-4

Price: GBP 95.-Hardback

'Targeted therapy for cancer' contains 343 pages including index and reference lists after each of the 18 chapters written by 39 authors mainly from USA and UK.

This book can be seen as an excellent introduction to a wide range of dissimilar treatment strategies, which in a broad sense can be called targeted strategies. Some would argue that this terminology should be reserved for therapy strategies involving highly tumour selective treatments against a specific tumour target.

The authors of chapter 3 should really be acknowledged for their thoughts on the importance of analysing tumour biopsies and for using FDG-PET for functional therapy evaluations for novel therapies, while our conventional X-ray based techniques will not deliver sufficient information. 'Targeted therapy for cancer' covers a comprehensive overview and short introductions of a long list of therapy principles; e.g. monoclonal antibodies, combination of external beam radiation and radioimmunotherapy, immunotherapy, gene therapy, antisense therapy, liposomal targeting of drugs, antiangiogenic therapy, targeting of the metastatic process and BNCT.

Targeted cancer therapy is presently experiencing a marked increased interest of different tyrosine kinase inhibitors. This part is not fully updated and the pertinent description of STI 571 (imatinib, *Gleevec*[®]) is missing. The rather remarkable effects on patients with CML and CD 117 (c-kit) overexpressing GIST (gastrointestinal stroma cell tumours) malignancies should have been included in a book published in 2003. Similar lack of recent update can also be remarked for trastuzumab (*Herceptin*[®]) (two chapters), 17-1A (*Panorex*[®]) and the anti-CD 20 monoclonal antibody rituximab (*Mabthera*[®]). The description of liposomal encapsulated drugs is rather extensive; the reviewer does not share the optimism for this therapy principle described by the authors.

JONAS BERGH

Department of Clinical and Molecular Oncology
Radiumhemmet
Karolinska Institute and Hospital
Stockholm, Sweden

The Atlas of Diagnostic Oncology

A.T. Skarin, editor

Elsevier Science Ltd., 2003, third edition, 625 p, (distributed by Mosby)

ISBN: 0-7234-32066

Price: GBP 120.-

This book was developed, written and brought up-to-date by Dr. Skarin and his colleagues at the Harvard Medical School Faculty and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, MA, US. Compared with previous editions of 'Atlas of Diagnostic Oncology' the present edition comprises a new chapter focussing on systemic and

mucocutaneous reactions to chemotherapy, but first of all this atlas is superior to any oncological textbook by its photographic presentation of diagnostic procedures, including histopathology, radiographs, CT, MRI, and PET images. More than 1500 high-quality pictures and tables coupled with a brief explanatory text describe epidemiology, pathology, including histopathological staging, diagnostic studies, prognostic factors, and clinical manifestations. This publication is more than anything an atlas, but it comprises not only oncology but also covers malignant haematology in details, and can be of great importance to oncologists, haematologists as well as specialists in related branches, such as diagnostic radiology, nuclear medicine, radiotherapy and pathology. As a novelty the atlas comes with a very useful CD-rom, which displaces the 35 mm slide sets in the previous edition. The authors must be congratulated on an excellent book which can be highly recommended as a standard literature in every library of oncological departments, as a tool in diagnostic oncology.

HELLE PAPPOT

Department of Oncology
Rigshospitalet
Copenhagen, Denmark

Principles and Practice of Head and Neck Oncology

R. Rhys Evans, P. Montgomery & P. Gullane, editors

Martin Dunitz Ltd., 2003, 633 p, 470 colour illustrations, 40 drawings

ISBN: 1-89906-606-3

Price: GBP 150.-

Teamwork and thoroughness are the dominating factors in this multidisciplinary book. The 45 authors, half of them from the UK and at one time or another having worked in either Royal Marsden Hospital or Princess Margaret Hospital, have described each discipline carefully and without repetition. The manual describes currently prevalent multimodality treatment modes, but is open to new forms of treatment, and thus represents a well-balanced view on head and neck oncology.

Part 1 describes basic principles and includes a well-written chapter on molecular biology as well as imaging, nutritional support, anaesthesia, dental care, nursing care, palliation therapy, and the more usual aetiology and epidemiology, surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Parts 2 and 3 examine the various types of squamous cell cancer groups, larynx, pharynx and oral cancer and other tumours including thyroid, melanoma of the cutis and mucous membrane, sarcoma, craniofacial tumours and even describe juvenile angiofibroma. Each group of diseases is examined with reference to anatomy, pathology, epidemiology, aetiology, sites, TNM, biology and natural history, clinical presentation, treatment and the results of it, follow-up and future treatment plans.

The matter in question in part 4 is reconstruction, complication arising from surgery and voice rehabilitation. The book directs itself to trainees in head and neck oncology and trainees in head and neck surgery. A detailed description of surgical procedures (and radiotherapy) is beyond the scope of the book, although surgery covers a major part of the book. The book is richly illustrated with many classical references as well as references from the 90's, though references from the year 2000 and onward are scarcely represented.

The medical personnel entrusted with treatment and care of head and neck patients will benefit from reading the book, which ought to be available in every oncology centre engaged in the treatment of neck cancer patients.

HANNE SAND HANSEN
Department of Oncology 5073
The Finsen Center
Rigshospitalet
Copenhagen, Denmark

Atlas of Procedures in Gynecologic Oncology

D. Levine, R. Barakat & W. Hoskins, authors
Martin Dunitz Ltd., 2003,
ISBN: 1-841841-196 X
Price: GBP 135.-

The staff at one of the world's most renowned cancer centers have jointly produced a practical guide to the procedures included in gynecologic oncology (open and minimally invasive surgery). The procedures are described and illustrated with more than 800 colour photographs. It is a multi-author book covering all fields of surgical gynecological oncology. The different chapters are very well organised. The book supplies an introduction to basic gynecologic oncology procedures, such as surgical staging, vulvar surgery and radical hysterectomy but also sections for the fellow-in-training, such as laparoscopic lymph node dissection, intraoperative radiation therapy, and inguino-femoral lymphadenectomy. New technologies are described, such as sentinel lymph node biopsy and radical vaginal trachelectomy. The chapters in the book are presented in detail, giving the reader a complete working knowledge of each procedure. I warmly recommend 'Atlas of Procedures in Gynecologic Oncology' as an excellent text book for all doctors interested in gynecological oncology. The book will remain the yardstick for years to come and belongs in every department of gynecological oncology. Nor will individual gynecologists and gynecological oncologists regret buying it for private personal use.

CONSTANTIN S. IOSIF
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
University Hospital
Lund, Sweden

DNA Topoisomerases in Cancer Therapy

T. Andoh, editor
Kluwer Academic, 2003, 202 p.
ISBN: 0-306-47744-0
Price: EURO 102.-

Divided into 9 chapters, this book presents a precise update on the current knowledge of the molecular mechanisms involved in topoisomerase function and inhibition as well as resistance mechanisms. In-depth description of the function of the DNA topoisomerases I and II is provided by a panel of distinguished pioneer researchers in the field. Moreover, updates on various investigational tools, such as yeast technology, are comprehensively described.

The book is a must for basic researchers and clinicians with an interest in the molecular biology of topoisomerase-directed anti-cancer drug therapy. As it provides a broad and yet to the point

insight to current knowledge and directions for future research, experienced and upcoming topoisomerase researches now have access to a high-impact reference book.

SEPPO W. LANGER
Department of Oncology, Finsen Center 5073
Rigshospitalet
Copenhagen, Denmark

Text Atlas of Lymphomas, Revised Edition

J. Armitage, F. Cavallo, E. Zucca & D. Longo, editors
Martin Dunitz Ltd., 2003, 208 p.
ISBN: 1-84184-180-3
Price: GBP 49.95 Paperback

This book is advertised as a revised edition of the first Text Atlas of Lymphomas, published in 1999. The revisions are, however, very minor, the present book being almost identical to the previous one. The new WHO classification is summarised on one page in the beginning, but otherwise it is hard to find any major novelties. All illustrations are identical to those in the 1999 edition and most of the text is identical word by word.

With regard to the details of the new WHO classification the reader is better served by the original official publication by Jaffe et al. However, the present book is still very useful in giving practical clinical advice on how to evaluate and treat patients with different types of lymphoma, as far as is known today, given the fact that many of the entities have only been defined less than a decade ago. It is not stated who of the four authors wrote the different chapters, but some inconsistencies reveal a lack of coordination (e.g., the need for CNS prophylaxis for primary extradural lymphoma, the use of the term 'high-grade MALT lymphoma'). The treatment recommendations are generally very sound and slightly conservative, which is not surprising since very little revision has been made after the 1999 edition. However, some chapters, notably the one on Hodgkin lymphoma (strangely, the old name of Hodgkin's disease, which is no longer in the official classification, is still used throughout), give the author's very personal view of the treatment, not entirely supported by the results of clinical trials and not in accordance with present day treatment strategies in the vast majority of large centres and groups (e.g., staging laparotomy and radiotherapy as single modality treatment is still mentioned in the treatment of some subgroups of patients with early stage classical Hodgkin lymphoma). The lack of thorough revision is probably also the reason why gallium scans are still being extensively recommended and no mention whatsoever is made of the use of PET scans.

In summary, there is absolutely no reason to purchase the revised edition if one already has the 1999 edition. For a general, authoritative description of the new lymphoma classification the official WHO publication is far more superior. The present book is useful with regard to the more clinical aspects of the new lymphoma classification, but a thorough revision bringing it up to date with regard to the treatment of all the entities would be appropriate. A sound and balanced overview of the present standard treatment of the many lymphoma entities is very much needed by all oncologists treating lymphomas and so, hopefully, a thorough revision of the Text Atlas of Lymphomas will appear in a not too distant future.

LENA SPECHT
Finsen Center
Rigshospitalet
Copenhagen, Denmark