

World Cancer Report

B. Stewart & P. Kleihues, editors
IARC, Lyon, 2003, 352 pp, more than 500 colour
photographs, diagrams & tables
ISBN: 92-832-0411-5
Price: USD 25.-.

In the year 2000, ten million people developed a malignant disease and over six million died from the disease. These figures are expected to grow by 50% over the next 20 years. The World Health Organisation has initiated several projects to combat this development, such as vaccination programs against HBV and HCV, the Framework Convention on tobacco control, and the WHO Guidelines for National Cancer Control Programs published recently. World Cancer Report is intended to supplement these guidelines with a scientific basis for public health action aimed at 'reducing morbidity and mortality from cancer and to improve quality of life for cancer patients and their families everywhere in the world'.

More than 50 international researchers have contributed to this report. It contains chapters on: the global burden of cancer, causes of cancer, mechanisms of tumour development, prevention and screening, human cancer by organ site, cancer management, and cancer control. The chapter on causes of cancer contains 12 sections on different risk factors, and the chapter on human cancer by organ site describes 17 of the major cancer forms. The chapter on cancer management includes sections on surgery, radiotherapy, medical oncology, rehabilitation and palliative care, and the cancer control chapter gives a global outlook on cancer control, cancer control in developing countries and perspectives and priorities. All chapters and sections are edited in the same way, starting with a concise summary of facts, and richly illustrated with medical images, graphs and tables. References to literature and important websites are given at the end of each section.

This is a concise and attractive presentation of the major aspects of cancer disease and its impact on society, and could be recommended to a wide audience.

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Management of Infection in Oncology Patients

J. R. Wingard & R. A. Bowden, editors
Martin Dunitz, 2003, 451 pp
ISBN: 1-90186-598-3

In the introduction the editors state that modern cancer therapy would not be possible without innovations in supportive care. This comprehensive textbook is written by experts and presents state of the art in an essential aspect of supportive care: the infectious complications to malignancy and chemotherapy. It has a nice typography and is very well-structured, with a basic part about host defense and reviews of infectious syndromes in patients with solid tumors, hematological disorders and stem cell transplantation. Then follows detailed descriptions of every relevant bacterial, viral and mycotic infection in patients with malignant disease. Three chapters

deal with management of candida, aspergillus and other fungi, reflecting the increasing impact of these microorganisms on the clinical setting. Other chapters deal with the use of colony factors, immunoglobulins, the potential of granulocyte transfusion and other aspects of the topic. Each chapter in the book is equipped with numerous informative figures and tables, as well as extensive references. There are relatively few, but typical, clinical illustrations. The index and list of contents make it easy to find way to substantial and practical information. The book is in particular intended for oncologists and hematologists, at all levels. Modern cancer chemotherapy is not possible without access to detailed information pertaining to infectious complications and this book contributes absolutely to achieve that goal.

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Textbook of Melanoma

J. F. Thompson, D. L. Morton & B. B. R. Kroon, editors
Martin Dunitz
ISBN: 1-90186-565-7
Price: GBP 225.-.

This new textbook is a real gold mine for every doctor who has a profound interest in melanoma. The aim of the editors has been 'to be the definite reference on all matters concerning the diagnosis and management of the various primary and metastatic forms melanoma'. I must admit that the aim has been full-filled to a large extent. The textbook has 14 sections with altogether 64 chapters and 687 pages. Each chapter is a comprehensive review with extensive references written by well-known and international contributors highly reputed in the melanoma field. The layout, figures and photographs are excellent.

The textbook is up-to-date and covers all from history, skin immunity, epidemiology, dermatoscopy, the new AJCC 2002 classification of melanoma, sentinel node surgery (six chapters), different treatment strategies and surveillance of melanoma. Actual controversial issues like the role of sunscreen protectors, screening of melanomas and unresolved questions about sentinel node surgery are covered and discussed in detail. I can only congratulate the editors of Textbook of Melanoma and definitely recommend it to everyone who has a true interest in melanoma.

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Prognostic and Predictive Factors in Breast Cancer

R. Walker, author
Martin Dunitz, 2003, 219 pp
ISBN: 1-84184-300-8
Price: GBP 45.-.

The extent of the cancer at presentation, number of involved axillary lymph nodes, and histopathological grading have been, and

still are, the most important prognostic factors in breast cancer patients. The determination of estrogen receptor content of the breast tumor gave the first predictive information with respect to response to endocrine therapy. Mammographic screening has led to detection of breast cancer at a low stage in a majority of the patients. Introduction of breast conserving and axillary sparing therapies demands further and more precise prognostic and predictive factors.

In the work 'Prognostic and Predictive Factors in Breast Cancer' 29 expert contributors in 12 different chapters review findings from microscopy, immunohistochemistry and sophisticated biochemistry, and try to answer the question 'what will the primary tumor cells tell us about the behavior of the metastatic deposits that may be left in the patient?'. The introducing chapters underline the importance of morphological factors. The problem of occult axillary node metastases is discussed and as many as 26 factors are listed as potential makers for local recurrence in breast-conserving therapy. The presence of occult bone marrow metastases and its consequences for prognosis and treatment is another clinically important issue that is discussed in this book. Another interesting issue is the analysis of circulating DNA in peripheral blood that may be a new aspect on breast cancer diagnostics and follow-up in clinical practice. The usefulness of a light microscope is evident in the chapter about proliferation and apoptosis. Mitotic activity index and apoptotic index are determined on morphological specimens and especially the combination of these factors seems to separate low and high risk patients. Estrogen and progesterone receptor content in a breast tumor is a well-established predictive factor for response to endocrine treatment. However, this is not a black and white system. The complex activities in biologic systems are illustrated in a very interesting chapter on mitogen-activated protein kinase family and its interactions or communications with estrogen-mediated mechanisms. Cell adhesion molecules, cadherins and integrins, and matrix metalloproteinases are families of molecules involved in invasive and metastatic propensities of malignancy. You will see the complexity of this area when reading the chapter dealing with these molecules. A comprehensive chapter deals with the 'guardian of the genom' p53 gene, and its normal function, detection, mutation, overexpression and relation in breast cancer are described. HER2 is an established predictive marker for treatment with Herceptin in breast cancer. The different methods of assessments of HER2, old and new, and therapeutic implications are discussed in the last chapter.

This book is of value to everyone interested in breast cancer and provides detailed information on prognostic and predictive factor, both old established and new ones in the front line of research.

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The Oxford Dictionary of Medical Quotations

P. McDonald, author
Oxford University Press, 2003, 212 pp
ISBN: 0-19-263047-4
Price: GBP 25.-. Hardback

To collect quotations requires a lot from the person who dares to try. He/she needs an almost encyclopaedic knowledge, the security of a somnambulist and – of course – a great amount of diligence. It must also be very laborious and as a reader I feel very grateful to people who collect and to them who edit their work.

Sometimes during reading the book I asked myself the question: what is the difference between a quotation and an aphorism, which is said to be the shortest graphic expression of a thought.

The book is presented in the Oxford Dictionary series, which means that it has one side of bibliography and half of the book

filled with quotations from all over the world. The other part of the book consists of an index. There you can find valuable entries like disease, doctor, doctors, health, patient, patients, physician, and physicians.

A significant, anonymous quotation in the book says: *Medical statistics are like a bikini. What they reveal is interesting but what they conceal is vital.* I find it relevant in a positive way for the reader of the book.

The book is recommended to those interested in knowing what has already been said. It is an excellent source. The older you grow, the more fun you will get out of Medical Quotations.

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Clinical Target Volumes in Conformal and Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy

V. Grégoire, P. Scalliet & K. Ang, authors
Springer-Verlag, 2004, 246 pp
ISBN: 3-540-41380-4
Price: Euro 139.-. Hardcover

This book has been written by an international team of authors with a special interest in defining the clinical target volume as a prelude to conformal and intensity-modulated radiation therapy. They have focussed on the delineation of the clinical target volume of lymph node areas (CTV-N) both anatomically and for a variety of tumour sites. The main emphasis is on defining the location of lymph node areas for clinical target volume in each individual patient, by examining the likelihood of involvement and the anatomy and imaging of that particular tumour site.

The opening chapter is an excellent description of the morphological anatomy of the lymphatic system and lymph nodes throughout the body with matching anatomical and radiological illustrations of lymph node target volumes. The subsequent imaging chapter gives a succinct and clear overview of the role of CT and MRI in the definition of lymph nodes. There is a good section on the role of PET imaging in cancer, but little mention of ultrasound. The comprehensive chapter on lymph node target volumes in the head and neck area is based on surgical, pathological and imaging data and provides very helpful guidelines for clinical practice. Like many of the other chapters it does not attempt to cover the target volume of the primary tumour site. Specific chapters are dedicated to lung, oesophageal, breast, prostate, bladder, gynaecological, rectal, anal, soft tissue tumours, and lymphomas with the emphasis of each chapter on the delineation of lymph node areas for the CTV-N.

This book is well structured and provides a clear exposition of the lymphatic system and microscopic lymph nodes spread and accurate delineation of the CTV-N throughout the body. In addition it looks at CTV-T of the primary tumour for a limited number of tumour sites. It does not attempt to cover the whole issue of the planning target volume which is addressed in a recent publication from the British Institute of Radiology entitled 'Geometric Uncertainties in Radiotherapy – Defining the PTV'.

I can highly recommend this book to oncologists of all specialties as a well-written and excellent guide to clinical target volumes of the lymph node system for planning radiation treatment.

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