

Book Reviews

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Biological Therapy of Cancer

V. J. De Vita, S. Hellman, S. A. Rosenberg, eds.
J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, PA, USA, 1991, 768 pp
ISBN: 0-397-51027-6
USD 156.25.

Biotherapy promises to join surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy as a fourth major treatment approach for cancer patient in the next decade. For most clinicians and research scientists there is a great need for a full text-book within this area, which hitherto has been missed. 'Biologic therapy of cancer' fulfils these demands in a great measure. It was with a great satisfaction that I noticed that the distinguished editors have changed the term 'biological response modifiers' to 'biologic therapy' which is a more relevant expressions.

The first part of the book gives detailed basic information on principals of tumor immunity. It is very well written and can be followed also by those without a deeper knowledge in tumor immunology. The information in these chapters is *fundamental* knowledge for all oncologists today, not only for those actively engaged in biotherapy.

The remaining 650 pages deal with clinical biotherapy. The 'state-of-art' of all available biotherapeutic concepts in different tumors is described. The mechanisms of action and the therapeutic results of monoclonal antibodies, interleukins, interferons, colony stimulating factor, TNF, active immunization ('vaccination'), etc. are presented in a comprehensive way with a richness in figures and tables which material should also be of significant value for teachers. More spectaculare alternative strategies for therapy are thymosin, anti-angionetic factors, differentiating factors, Anti-sense compounds are also fully described.

The book is highly recommended to be used as a text-book and reference book. This is the first real standard book within this area. It should be in the library of every department dealing with oncological problems and should also be a property of all oncologists actively participating in biotherapy.

HAKAN MELLSTEDT

Monoclonal Antibodies. Applications in Clinical Oncology.

A. Epenetos, ed.
Chapman & Hall, London, 1991, 331 pp.
ISBN: 0-412-41090-7
GBP 65.00.

The book consists of 36 chapters, covering a wide range of subjects dealing with basic scientific, technical, preclinical, and clinical aspects on the use of monoclonal antibodies. The chapters are generally of a high quality with instructive illustrations and, easy to read. The wide range of subjects gives a rather kaleidoscopic impression of this rapidly evolving research field. This is on one hand inspiring as the many different topics may evoke numerous ideas of possible diagnostic and therapeutic applications of monoclonal antibodies. On the other hand, the kaleidoscopic introduction in this difficult area may leave a clinician rather confused with a question like: 'What is, in fact, the present status of the substantial application of monoclonal antibodies in clinical oncology'. In this respect, the promises in the subtitle 'Applications in clinical oncology' are not fulfilled.

I am convinced that this book will be of importance to scientists working with monoclonal antibodies. The book is also recommended to clinicians with a specific interest in the use of monoclonal antibodies within clinical oncology, whereas I do not consider the book as a suitable general introduction for clinicians in this complex research area.

HANS VON DER MAASE