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## Book Review

### Detection and Treatment of Early Breast Cancer

by Ian S. Fentiman.

London, Martin Dunitz. 1990, 280 pp. ISBN 1 853 17010 0. £49.95.

THE IMMEDIATELY notable feature of this book is that it is extremely well written. As a result it is easy to read, and a vast amount of information is summarised and presented concisely and lucidly. The author's aim of a cohesive yet "different style" of text to discuss the problems of detection and treatment of early breast cancer has been achieved.

The book falls naturally into two sections: the first contains predictable chapters on cause, presentation, diagnosis, screening, breast conservation, mastectomy and adjuvant treatment. Each topic is briefly reviewed historically, then a well-balanced account of the evidence is presented chronologically; the author's approach at Guy's Hospital is highlighted, and then summary recommendations and advice are given.

An outstanding part of this text is the many easy-to-understand tables. Whatever the topic (for example, the sensitivity and positive predictive value of cytology in breast diagnosis or the incidence of contralateral invasive carcinoma after biopsy of lobular carcinoma *in situ*) all major series about that topic are summarised in a table, and amplified in the conveniently adjacent text. Each series is added to the excellent reference lists at the end of the chapter.

A notable omission from this first section of the book is a chapter on pathology. Although small sections on pathology appear in various parts of the book, I found myself wishing more than once that there was such a chapter. The concepts of early and minimal breast cancer and their relation to the curability of breast cancer are covered only briefly, and I was disappointed by the omission of discussion on mucoid and tubular carcinomas.

The second section contains seven excellent chapters on important subjects, such as pregnancy and exogenous oestrogens, breast cancer in the elderly and Paget's disease. A welcome account of psychological strategies in treating patients with breast cancer is a highlight of this second section. Collectively these chapters fill a large gap not usually covered in books on breast cancer. Each contains a wealth of information and guidance for the breast cancer specialist who is increasingly challenged both by well-informed patients and by the state of current knowledge, which still leaves many questions unanswered. The problem is addressed in a final chapter "Where next?"

The index is extensive and a welcome feature here is the explanation of acronyms frequently used in breast cancer reports, such as EORTC (European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer), NATO, and ECOG (Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group), which to the non-specialist may be obscure. The book is well presented and bound, and the two

column format is easy to read. However, the reproduction of the clinical photographs and mammograms falls below this standard, and in their current form these illustrations do not add anything. This particularly applies to the four photographs of axillary dissection. There are two additional quibbles arising from the description of axillary dissection. Firstly, a transverse incision is more cosmetic, and is less likely to cause scar contracture than a vertical incision. Secondly, most would agree that ligatures or surgical clips should be applied to tributaries of the axillary vein.

Because of the absence of a pathology chapter this text is not ideal for the final FRCS examination. Despite these minor reservations, which could easily be remedied in a second edition, the surgical oncologist will be stimulated by this elegant, compact and lucid text.

J. Serpell  
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## News

### Immunotherapy of Cancer

A Boerhaave course on Immunotherapy of Cancer will be held on 15 March 1991 in Leiden, The Netherlands. The course aims to review fundamental aspects of tumour immunology and clinical experience with immunotherapy. The course is designed for oncologists, immunologists, haematologists and those interested in clinical aspects of and research in tumour immunology. For further information, contact Mrs R.J. van Velzen, Boerhaave Committee, Postbus 2084, 2301 CB Leiden, The Netherlands. Tel (71) 275262.

### Symposium on Hormonal Carcinogenesis

The first international Symposium on Hormonal Carcinogenesis will be held in Cancun, Mexico, on 19-23 March 1991. Topics will include hormones and carcinogenesis, oestrogen metabolism, tumour promotion and growth factors and oncogenes. For further information contact Dr J. J. Li, Hormonal Carcinogenesis Laboratory, College of Pharmacy, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-6510, USA. Tel (509) 335 1326/6285.

### Ultrastructural Pathology and Diagnostic Electron Microscopy

Dr F.N. Ghadially will give a course on ultrastructural pathology and diagnostic electron microscopy of tumours on 9-13 September 1991. For details, please contact Dr M. Jane Thomas or Dr Feroze N. Ghadially, Canadian Reference Centre for Cancer Pathology, Clinical Studies Unit Building, 60 Ruskin Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4M9, Canada. Tel (613) 728-1723, Fax (613) 728-0811.

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