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## Book Reviews

### Endoscopic Approaches to Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment

Edited by Y. Oguro and K. Takagi. Basingstoke, Taylor and Francis, 1990, 176 pp. ISBN 0748400168. £48.00.

TANAO OGURO, one of the editors of this Gann Monograph, is a pioneer of the application of optical fibre technology, high-frequency electric current, lasers, ultrasound and semi-conductors combined with the use of computers and microwaves. These sophisticated endoscopic techniques, which are described in this book, have contributed to the great progress made in both the diagnosis and therapy of cancer. The contributors are all clear, and their chapters are useful for the general physician as well as for the basic scientist.

The book is divided into three sections: history of the progress in endoscopy in the past two centuries and especially the past 20 years; diagnosis, including the most advanced methods for identifying and staging gastro-intestinal and pancreatico-biliary cancers; and treatment, with chapters on the therapeutic techniques recently introduced in cancer endoscopy.

As well as giving technical details, the book gives the general indications for the proper use of endoscopy, especially when other new diagnostic and therapeutic modalities are considered. One of the most difficult steps in the management of cancer patients is the selection of the most appropriate modality to use. Here again this book is helpful.

The section on electronic endoscopy is interesting and shows the high quality of the electronic image in analysing small structural alterations of gastric mucosa in, for example, the "minimal" forms of cancer. Models of quantitative analysis have been created by recording the image digitally.

Echoendoscopy leads to high-definition ultrasonic images, by inserting an ultrasonic probe under endoscopic control. The depth of invasion of oesophageal, gastric and colorectal carcinomas can be measured, and the presence of close lymph-node metastases assessed. The pancreas, gallbladder, biliary and pancreatic ducts, liver and kidneys can be seen by the endocavitary route. All this allows precise staging. In addition the effect of several therapies (such as laser endoscopy, chemotherapy and radiotherapy) can be monitored.

The comparison of retrograde pancreatography with ultrasonography, angiography and computed tomography in the diagnosis of pancreatic carcinoma is useful in classifying and relating the pancreatographic image to resectability for pre-surgical staging and for the diagnosis of early stage pancreatic carcinoma. The remarkable progress in this field is described. Cholangioscopy is described via the percutaneous and the perduodenoscopic routes, with discussion of the advantages of each for access to the biliary tract.

The sections on endoscopic treatment of tumours are the most attractive parts in the book. Oguro ranges from the treatment of early gastric carcinoma to a survey of endoscopic methods of treatment: high-frequency electric currents, laser, microwave and thermal-probe coagulation, photodynamic therapy (PDT) and per-endoscopic injection. The chapter on laser treatments is developed in more detail and examines the possibilities of

Nd:YAG laser, and of PDT in the wide experience of the Tokyo National Cancer Hospital. The endoscopic radical treatment of the EGC follows, with interesting results. The argument about colon polyps is discussed mainly from published reports because, in Japan, colon polyps and carcinoma are less frequent than in western countries.

PDT is reviewed by the Hayata and Kato group since they have the widest experience in the world. The methods and results of the first selective therapy of cancer are reported. This therapy is based on the administration of a photosensitising drug, which is selectively uptaken by the tumour. When activated by laser-light, the drug becomes toxic for the cancer cells. The chapter on laser bladder tumours reports results from the department of urology of the Nihon University School of Medicine with CO<sub>2</sub>, Nd:YAG and argon lasers.

This book, even if not complete (since other endoscopic therapies of cancer, such as prostheses in palliating oesophageal and biliary obstructions, are not discussed) is an important attempt to bring to the attention of both specialists and general practitioners the possibilities offered by the endoscopic methods, which are characterised by low costs and generally negligible trauma.

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### Nutrients and Cancer Prevention

Edited by K.N. Prasad and F.L. Meyskens. Clifton, New Jersey, Humana Press, 1990. 481 pp. ISBN 0896030946. £79.70.

THIS BOOK contains the proceedings of the second meeting of the International Association for Vitamin and Nutritional Oncology (IAVNO). It appears by the variety of typefaces used between chapters that text has been published directly from material supplied by the authors of the individual chapters. The problems which this method of production can cause are highlighted by the hand-written correction evident on page 85, line 2.

Cancer prevention and trials in humans of cancer prevention agents are major and important areas of cancer research activity at the present time. Currently there is an intensive activity and much resultant increase in knowledge of the effects of various compounds in different body tissues. Thus, any contribution to this field at the present time is of potential importance.

As in any book resulting from the proceedings of a meeting, there is a wide variety in the quality and focus of the chapters. However, there are some chapters which I found particularly useful. Among these were the chapters by Dr R.C. Moon (Retinoids and Prevention of Experimental Cancer), Dr R.J. Shomberger (Selenium and Vitamin E in Cancer Prevention), Dr H.P. Fortmeyer (Vitamin B6 and Cancer) and the chapter by Dr R.A.R. Kennedy on protease inhibitors.

Individual researchers and others interested in the area will find something useful in this book.

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