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Book Review

Prevention and Early Detection of Colorectal Cancer

Editors: G.P. Young, P. and Rozen, B. Levin

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COLORECTAL CANCER is a preventable and curable disorder and it is, along with breast and lung cancer, one of the most common cancers in Western societies. In an ambitious attempt to integrate recent advances of biological, clinical and economic research, the editors have invited outstanding researchers and clinicians to contribute to the book.

The book has four sections. The first section explains the biological basis on which prevention of colorectal cancer should be based. Further chapters describe the pathology, including molecular biology of cancer development, addressing all stages from normal to invasive cancer cells. Those biological issues which might be amenable to manipulation and to identification prior to development of the invasive cancer cell are emphasised. The second section describes the various means available for manipulating biology of cancer development. In a separate chapter, newly emerging genetic information is integrated into clinical practice. The chapters on preventive measures based on lifestyle changes (e.g. diet) and administered agents (e.g. chemopreventive agents such as aspirin) are well balanced. The third section on "Management of Those at Risk for Colorectal Cancer" contains chapters which define the risk for colorectal cancer and describe disease states, some inherited, which dramatically influence risk. Other chapters deal with surveillance strategies for patients with colorectal adenomas or cancers, as well as the problem of cancer mortality in inflammatory bowel disease. The fourth section entitled "Community Approach to Prevention of Colorectal Cancer", describes the tools available for screening. In further chapters, the complex and controversial issue of prevention by early detection in those of undefined risk is discussed from various perspectives. A separate chapter is dedicated to the economical issues, discussing the cost-effectiveness of color-

ectal cancer screening in average-risk adults. Finally, a well-balanced overview on screening for colorectal cancer is provided.

This book represents a comprehensive approach to the issues involved in prevention ("primary prevention") and early detection ("secondary prevention") of colorectal cancer and its precursor states, such as adenoma. I congratulate both the editors and authors of this book since it provides an authoritative up-to-date analysis of the scientific information as well as practical advice based on critical review of the current state of knowledge. I am delighted to have this valuable book in my library and I highly recommend it to all clinicians dealing with gastrointestinal disease and those interested in preventive medicine and health economics.

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Letters

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Role of Radical Prostatectomy in Micrometastases Dissemination

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A MAJOR controversy is whether surgical manipulation in patients with prostate cancer causes cell dissemination, as seen in testicular germ cell neoplasm after orchidectomy, or

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