

BOOK REVIEW

Important Advances in ONCOLOGY 1991

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This text is the seventh in a series of annual volumes and will be of general interest to those specialists following developments in basic research, treatment and attitudes in the field of oncology. The 14 Chapters of the text are divided into 3 main parts; basic research, clinical progress and a small one part Chapter on controversies in oncology. There are 34 expert contributors. The basic research Chapters describe studies relating to oncogenes, multidrug resistance, chromosomal deletions in colon cancers, scheduling of chemotherapy, radiation sensitivity, and opportunities to interface with the metastatic process. Chapter 1 discusses the role of human papillomaviruses and related oncoproteins in transformation and carcinogenic progression; Chapter 2 reviews current understanding of the expression of P-glycoprotein in human tumors and normal tissues, being the principal determinant in the multidrug resistance phenotype in human cancer; Chapter 3 reviews six approaches to analyze genetic predisposition to cancer; Chapter 4 discusses two conceptual approaches to drug dosing and scheduling; Chapter 5 reviews cellular and molecular aspects of human tumor radioresistance focussing on the role of tumor cell radioresistance or radiosensitivity in radiotherapy and on possible mechanisms of radioresistance. The final Chapter 6 under basic research, reviews potential new metastasis suppressor gene products *nm23* and *TIMP-2*.

Diagnostic imaging provides an important tool in the fight against cancer and in particular in patient management. Chapter 7 reviews this role of imaging in the evaluation of pelvic cancers. Chapter 8 discusses high-dose chemotherapy and autologous bone marrow support for breast cancers; Chapter 9 discusses new frontiers in radiation therapy and in particular 3D conformal treatment therapy; Chapter 10 reviews advances in the management and treatment of patients with carcinoma of unknown primary site achieved by recognising tenable subsets within the heterogeneous population of such patients; Chapter 11 discusses chemotherapy and the management of locally advanced squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck, and particularly the role in larynx preservation; Chapter 12 discusses the continuing attempts to decrease cigarette smoking and reviews trends between 1964 and 1989 in the USA. Some recommendations for future research are also included. A review of colony-stimulating factors, that family of glycoproteins which regulate cellular activity of mature blood cells and having critical importance in general host defence, oxygen consumption, and hemostasis, is included in the last Chapter 13 of the clinical applications section. In the final Part 3 of the text, Chapter 14a answers the question "is a mechanism such as the NCI's clinical alert ever an appropriate alternative to journal peer review? and discusses why the answer is a qualified yes. Chapter 14a has two Appendixes, one relating to breast cancer, a clinical alert from the National Cancer Institute, which is discussed also in Chapter 14b, and the other a clinical update for colon cancers treated with levamisole and 5-fluorouracil. The text concludes with a 16 page comprehensive subject index.

The text contains 1164 references usefully with full titles. Because this text is a compilation of very broad ranging topics in the field of

oncology, for example from molecular genetics to chemotherapy, it is likely to be acquired mainly by reference libraries serving the needs of specialists. The text is very well produced in clear readable print.

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