

Book Reviews

Principles and Practice of Genito-Urinary Oncology

Derek Raghavan, Steven A. Leibl, Howard I. Scher, and Paul Lange. Philadelphia: Lippincott-Raven, 1997. ISBN 0-397-51458-1.

This is a comprehensive book on all aspects of genito-urinary neoplasms written by world renowned medical oncologists, a radiation oncologist and a urologist. A large number of experts (226 authors) have contributed to this textbook.

The first section of the book features the basic principles of medical biology techniques, the biology of metastases in renal cell cancer, the clinical decision-making in genito-urinary oncology, and the radiology imaging of genito-urinary neoplasms. Other chapters cover the principles of retroperitoneal and pelvic surgery, the application of endoscopic surgery for genito-urinary cancer, the technical innovation and the biological basis for three-dimensional conformal radiotherapy and the principles of chemotherapy for genito-urinary cancer. New studies of systemic therapy and gene therapy of genito-urinary cancer, palliative care and advances in symptom management, orthopedic management of metastases, and statistical consideration for the use of literature in health systems research, the organization of support services and the cost of treatment, are valuable and informative additional chapters in this important section. The remaining 11 sections with numerous chapters cover the most important clinical aspects of bladder cancer, prostate cancer, testis cancer, renal cancer, cancer of the penis, adrenal cancer, genito-urinary sarcomas, pediatric sarcomas, soft tissue sarcomas, neuroblastoma and Wilm's tumor/nephroblastoma. All these chapters offer the reader important aspects of anatomy, pathology, clinical presentation, the molecular biology, the immunology, diagnosis and management of early and advanced genito-urinary neoplasms. This textbook is an important source of information for practising urologists, residents in urology, oncologists, pathologists, immunologists and practically any physician involved in the management of genito-urinary cancer. It is comprehensive in its scope, well-referenced with in-depth valuable clinical information on the various aspects of each genito-urinary cancer, including pediatric neoplasms. The various chapters on molecular biology, molecular genetics and carcinogenesis provide an excellent review of the latest advances in these fields. The first chapter on the principles of molecular biology techniques as diagnostic markers in prostate and bladder cancer is rich in basic information, but somewhat short with regard to the modern clinical implications and applications. This new embryonic field, which is growing

rapidly, makes it difficult to update the recent developments in such a textbook. The chapter on the biology of metastases with respect to renal cell cancer carries the reader to the depths of the recent theories regarding the development of metastases. The chapter on urologic imaging of genito-urinary neoplasms is rather elementary and superficial, and could have been extended to include some new developments such as Spect MRI and angiographic spiral CT scans in the diagnosis and treatment of bladder and renal cancers. The "Innovations and the Biologic Basis for Three-Dimensional Conformal Therapy" represents a novel approach for the management of prostatic carcinoma, which is well written and amply illustrated. It should be of great benefit for urologists to comprehend this new technique. The various chapters on chemotherapy, surgical principles, gene therapy, and palliative treatment offer an in-depth and comprehensive review of the most recent advances in these fields. Valuable information is obtained in the chapters on the management of stage (C) T3 and stage D1 prostate cancer. The controversial aspects of such treatment are well illustrated. Although the chapters dealing with surgical management of genito-urinary neoplasms are short of illustrations, this could be explained by the fact that this textbook does not represent an atlas of genito-urinary surgery.

Principles and Practice of Genito-Urinary Oncology is an ambitious undertaking which has been extremely successful in providing the reader with a most comprehensive review of the molecular, biologic, cytogenetic and clinical aspects of genito-urinary neoplasms. This excellent book, written by prominent experts in this field, should be considered as a reference book for the understanding, diagnosis and management of genito-urinary neoplasms. The authors have certainly succeeded in providing the urologists with one of the most comprehensive books on genito-urinary cancers. It represents an important source of information which would be of great help in the clinical management of genito-urinary neoplasms.

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Master Techniques in Orthopedic Surgery: The Spine

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A ten-volume series of orthopedic atlases entitled *Master Techniques in Orthopedic Surgery* has recently been published under the editorship of Dr. Roby C. Thompson,

Jr. These atlases are specifically designed for the clinicians who deal with difficult but relatively common problems in their daily practice. *The Spine* is one of the volumes of this series and was edited by Dr. David Bradford, with contributions from 33 well-known spine surgeons from North America. The book is beautifully illustrated with many intraoperative photographs of exceptional quality, combined with appropriate anatomical sketches. Case illustrations show detailed descriptions and photographs with appropriate imaging studies. The book is designed for surgeons whose practices involve a significant amount of spine surgery. Its highly illustrated and descriptive text allows for a very good understanding of the surgical procedure proposed, and goes to great length in helping the surgeon to avoid the pitfalls that are possible with these often very difficult procedures. I would recommend very highly that this atlas be an integral part, and perhaps even the most important volume, for anyone considering doing spine surgery as part of their clinical practice.

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Environmental Health Criteria 190. International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS)

World Health Organization, Geneva, 1997.
 ISBN 92 4 157 190 X.

This publication is part of a continuing series on environmental health criteria (EHC) documents published by WHO since 1976. The monograph follows the same format established for previous criteria documents. Although small in size, it is probably the single most authoritative source on the health effects of xylene exposure, and has been collated by an Expert Committee of occupational health professionals from different parts of the world. Information presented on the potential consequences of xylene exposure in humans includes

genetic, neurotoxic, teratogenic, nephrotoxic and specific end-organ effects related to chronic and acute exposure taken from research studies on controlled animal studies, investigations on the effects of low level exposure of human volunteers and retrospective epidemiological studies. One of the most impressive aspects of this monograph is the extensive bibliography which accounts for 30 of the 147 pages, exhaustively collected and assembled from reliable up-to-date international sources.

This EHC document on xylene is well organized into 12 chapters covering human health criteria, chemical properties, analytical methods to determine exposure levels, exposure effects on humans, animals and organisms, environmental distribution, transport and transformation, in addition to a comprehensive discussion and comparison of exposure standards adopted by different countries for regulatory purposes. Contributing experts justifiably emphasize the need to exercise caution in treating standards too rigidly when applying the health criteria in actual practice, due to the large and variable "safety factors," statistical modeling theory and other inherent assumptions that are built into the human health risk assessment data by different international agencies.

Physicians will find Chapter 8 on human health effects of xylene exposure useful in dealing with diagnostic aspects of potential human exposures to xylene in accidental poisoning, worker exposure in occupational settings or recreational abuse such as "glue sniffing." The final two chapters present a short one-page conclusion and recommendations for future research.

The obviously narrow focus of this publication is directed primarily at public health practitioners, occupational hygienists and government regulatory agencies responsible for setting protective health exposure standards for chemical hazards.

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