

## BOOK REVIEW

### Esophageal Cancer: Principles and Practice

Blair A. Jobe, Charles R. Thomas, Jr., John G. Hunter, editors  
New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2009  
848 pages, \$199  
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This book fills a niche that has remained open for years: a text devoted to the evolving treatment of esophageal cancer. Although other oncology and surgery textbooks have covered the topic in chapter form, no textbook has attempted to comprehensively cover this broad subject in many years. This text addresses several important developments over the last few years, including results from clinical trials, advances in technology, and progress in our understanding of molecular oncology.

The book is divided into seven sections. Section one covers the biology of esophageal cancer, including anatomic, molecular, epidemiologic, and histopathologic aspects. Section two covers all aspects of staging and imaging, including interesting chapters on endoscopic ultrasound and positron emission tomography scanning. Also included in this section is an excellent discussion on the evolving classification of gastroesophageal junction tumors (specific treatment recommendations for these tumors are also discussed in later chapters). The third section on principles of therapy discusses the foundations of multimodality therapy for esophageal cancer, including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, targeted agents, and surgery, laying the groundwork for more specific recommendations discussed later. Section four is a significant resource for clinicians who treat esophageal cancer; this section includes brief descriptions of the presentation, treatment, and prognosis of every tumor type found in the esophagus, from benign fibroblastic polyps to lymphoma and sarcoma, as well as the more mundane squamous cell carcinoma and adenocarcinoma.

The second half of the book deals with the treatment of esophageal cancer in a more detailed fashion. Specific treatment recommendations are laid out in section five, the largest section, where chapters describing the multidisciplinary care of esophageal cancer patients and appropriate informed consent are followed by chapters discussing neoadjuvant therapy, radiotherapy treatment planning, endoscopic treatment

options, and a comprehensive discourse on surgical approaches and techniques. This discussion of the various surgical approaches is invaluable to the radiation oncologist, as it meticulously describes the many techniques available for esophagectomy and reconstruction. The chapters in this section discussing the rationale for radiochemotherapy in esophageal cancer and cancer of the gastroesophageal junction are also particularly helpful to the radiation oncologist. The chapter discussing radiotherapy treatment planning provides specific guidelines and recommendations for planning objectives and the use of three-dimensional conformal and intensity-modulated radiation therapy approaches. Section six focuses on palliative care for esophageal cancer patients and has helpful information for dealing with pain, dysphagia, and progression of disease. There are several chapters in this section on the management of dysphagia, including chapters describing the use of stents, lasers, photodynamic therapy, and brachytherapy. Section seven, future directions, includes a single chapter that discusses the use of molecular markers to predict outcome. This chapter ties in with the discussion in section three on targeted therapies that are also likely to impact this field in the future.

The book lists at \$199; however, a quick search online revealed it could be had, new, for around \$140. The only negative comment I would make concerning this text is that it has no color plates. The black and white figures are adequate for the surgical diagrams and line graphs, but black and white histology slides add little to the educational value of the book. Color figures also would have enhanced the significant value of the chapters on endoscopy and radiotherapy planning. Overall, the book will prove very helpful to the radiation oncologist who treats, even occasionally, or has a special interest in, esophageal cancer. It is a single, comprehensive source for current information regarding the biology, staging, and treatment of esophageal cancer, as well as an excellent guide to the management of patients suffering from this disease.

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