Book Reviews

M. Bolla, C. Racinet, C. Vrousas (eds) Endometrial Cancers
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The book contains the papers presented at the 5th Cancer Research Workshop devoted to endometrial cancer which was held in Grenoble, France, in April 1985. The 37 contributions are divided into 7 sections: epidemiology, detection and prevention, pathology and cytology, prognostic factors, steroid receptors and immunohistochemistry, therapeutic modalities and therapeutic results. The last 3 topics comprise more than two thirds of the book, what demonstrates that better definition and development of appropriate therapeutic approaches for patients with high-risk endometrial cancer have top priority in clinical research.

The content of the book thus guarantees a comprehensive survey on epidemiology, early diagnosis, pathology and the clinical aspects of endometrial cancer. On the other hand, some of its contributions also give a deeper insight into important problems of the current research. The editors as well as the publisher succeeded in publishing the presentations of the above mentioned workshop within a very short time, what makes the book a valuable source of up-to-date information for all those who are interested in the subject.

K. Ebeling, Berlin-Buch


The book presents a collection of manuscripts submitted by participants of a workshop on breast cancer markers and their possible clinical significance. The workshop, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute of the USA, was held in 1985 at the NIH in Bethesda, Md. There are three sections of papers concerning circulating serum tumor markers (3 contributions), breast cancer antigens (2 contributions), and endocrinological events indicating breast cancer development (3 contributions).

The papers in section one refer to the role of circulating human mammary epithelial antigens as serum markers for breast cancer, glycosyltransferases as marker enzymes in neoplasia, and serum and tumor sialyltransferase activities in women with breast cancer. Some of the data look promising, yet, obviously, the problems related to appropriate clinical test procedures are substantial.

In section two the fundamental and diagnostic role of T and Tn antigens in breast carcinoma is considered. It is shown that the detection of autoimmunity to these blood group antigen precursors might help to improve the diagnosis of early stages of breast carcinoma. The second paper in this section reports properties of a novel monoclonal antibody to a tumor-associated breast cancer antigen. The antigen is expressed in about 60% of breast tumors in vivo. Thus it does not fit well as a target for immunological tumor diagnosis. For the latter purpose, the combination of the antibody with other monoclonal
antibodies is indicated. Since the antigen can be detected in paraffin sections, the antibody may be a useful marker for immunohistological detection of metastatic cells.

Section three is concerned with the biochemical epidemiology of breast cancer. The 52,000-dalton protein as an estrogen-regulated marker of cell proliferation in human mammary cells, and the estrogen regulation of H 59 antigen in vivo and in vitro are discussed in detail. The book provides a concise compilation of developments in the field of breast cancer markers. It can serve to outline future approaches to therapy. The main tasks of coming work are pointed out, namely to understand the process of estrogen-regulated cell proliferation as well as the interaction of the patient’s immune system with the cellular structures being expressed during breast carcinoma development.

S. Tanneberger, Berlin-Buch

Saad Khoury, Rene Kiiss, Gerald P. Murphy, Christian Chatelain, James P. Karr (eds) Testicular Cancer


The present book comprises the proceedings of the First International Symposium on Testicular Tumors held in Paris, October 8-10, 1984.

In the last decade great progress has been made in regard to survival and cure of patients suffering from malignant testicular tumors even in advanced stages. The reason for this progress is the availability of more meticulous diagnostic and more intensive combined treatment modalities.

The book ‘Testicular Cancer’ summarizes the present knowledge concerning pathologic, epidemiologic, diagnostic and treatment aspects of testicular tumors. The first section deals with the pathological classifications, the problems of histogenesis of testicular tumors, histological changes ostensibly induced by therapy in the metastases, the formation of metastases to testis proceeding from other malignant tumors, and the specific anatomo-surgical problems and histological findings in the specimen after curative chemotherapy. The second section reviews the value of the tumor markers for the follow-up and the response to treatment, the problem of beta-HCG-producing seminoma and of the radioimmunodetection and immunohistochemistry of germ cell tumors. Results of several clinical studies are presented. In a further section the intrinsic and extrinsic risk factors for testicular cancer and the role of a trauma for the origination or promotion of a testicular cancer are outlined. The questions of undescended testis are covered in the next section, so the hormonal regulation of testicular descent, the carcinoma in situ of the cryptorchid testis, the diagnostic and treatment and risk of cancer of the undescended testis. The subjects of the fifth section are the clinical features and diagnosis of the testicular tumors. The findings of the clinical examination are described, epidemiological and etiological aspects, and problems of clinical classification are discussed. The methods of clinical staging such as ultrasound, lymphography, computed tomography and nuclear magnetic resonance are described, their limits concerning the accuracy of staging and, therefore, the combination of the different methods are explained. The chapter written by N. Javadpur merits special emphasis. It deals with prognostic features in each stage of the disease, which were studied in accurate clinical trials, and the results are reported in detail. This is a very important point for the development of
treatment strategy in nonseminomatous testicular tumors and for the comparison of treatment studies. In the following chapters the authors point out the necessity of retroperitoneal lymphadenectomy in stage I and II nonseminomatous tumors. The opinions, especially the aspect of overtreatment in stage I, are controversial. The pros and cons of retroperitoneal lymphadenectomy are listed. The contribution written by Donohue contains schematic diagrams of the distribution of metastatic lymph nodes in testicular tumors based on his own data. Thus, modified methods of retroperitoneal lymphadenectomy aimed at preserving sexual functions are reported. The treatment modalities and management are covered in the next two sections. The results of radiotherapy and chemotherapy are reported. The chapters dealing with chemotherapy are of different quality. In the treatment studies presented, the patients’ characteristics are outlined mostly very extensively as well as the methods and the interpretation of results. Einhorn gives a comprehensive review about the chemotherapy of advanced testicular cancer. Several treatment studies using different schedules of chemotherapy are analyzed, and problems such as maintenance therapy, treatment of brain metastases, postchemotherapy surgery, potential long-term effects of treatment, salvage therapy, toxicity of chemotherapy in previously irradiated patients are discussed. On the other hand, a chapter dealing with enumeration of complete remission and survival rates obtained by different treatment schedules without discussing the proportion of high-risk patients and the proportion of adjunctive surgery in the various studies is only of limited value. Moreover there are many overlappings in the individual chapters, without which some of the contributions would have been shorter and more concise. This section also reports on the management of para testicular rhabdomyosarcomas.

Section 8 is devoted to the treatment of nonseminomatous tumors according to tumor stage. Several studies are reported. The opinions concerning the single or the sequential use of retroperitoneal lymphadenectomy and chemotherapy and even irradiation in stage I A and II B and concerning the ‘wait-and-see’ approach or lymphadenectomy in stage I are controversial. Treatment of testicular yolk sac tumors in children and Leydig cell tumors in adults are discussed, also the treatment of primary lymphoma of the testis. In the last part of this section the questions of fertility are touched upon.

The book shows clearly which problems have been solved to date and which remain open in the management of testicular tumors. Thus, it turns out a useful tool in the practice and in the scientific work of urologists, cancer pathologists, biochemists, radio- and chemotherapists and pediatricians.

H. Lenk, Berlin-Buch