

Book Reviews

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Gene Therapy of Cancer. Translational Approaches from Preclinical Studies to Clinical Implementation. Third Edition.

Edited by E.C. Lattime, S.L. Gerson.

2014, pp. 537, Eur 107.15, ISBN: 978-0-12-394295-1.
Academic Press, San Diego, CA, USA.

Cancer gene therapy, like cancer therapy in general, is evolving rapidly, testing new concepts, targets and pathways, evoking new technologies, and passing new regulatory hurdles. Its essence, however, has not changed: the hope and challenges of returning altered genes to normal, using targeted gene expression to alter the function of both tumor and microenvironment, and in some cases normal cells, and delivering functionally important genes to specific cell types to increase sensitivity to killing or to protect normal cells from cancer therapies.

In some instances, gene therapy for cancer forms a continuum from gene repair through the use of molecularly modified cells; the use of viral and non-viral vector based gene delivery to both tumor and tumor microenvironment; the use of viral and gene based vaccines; and development of new gene-based therapeutics. The unique mechanistically chosen vector platforms are at the heart of this technology because they allow for direct and selective cell death and transient to sustained delivery of vaccine molecules or molecules that affect the microenvironment, vasculature, or the immune response.

Gene therapy as a treatment for cancer is at a critical point in its evolution. Exciting new developments in gene targeting and vector technology, coupled with results from the first generation of preclinical and clinical studies have led to the design and testing of new therapeutic approaches. The Third Edition of Gene Therapy of Cancer provides crucial updates on the basic and applied sciences of gene therapy. It offers a comprehensive assessment of the field including the areas of suicide gene therapy, oncogene and suppressor gene targeting, immunotherapy, drug resistance gene therapy, and the genetic modification of stem cells.

Key features of the book: 1. Explanation of the underlying cancer biology necessary for understanding proposed therapeutic approaches; 2. In-depth description of targeting systems and treatment strategies; 3. Covering of the breadth of gene therapy approaches including immunotherapeutic, drug resistance, oncolytic viruses, as well as regulatory perspectives from both the NCI and FDA.

Researchers at all levels of development, from basic laboratory investigators to clinical practitioners, will find this book to be valuable and instructive.

Cancer Immunotherapy. Immune Suppression and Tumor Growth. Second Edition.

Edited by G.C. Prendergast, E.M. Jaffee.

2013, pp. 655, Eur 69.71, ISBN: 978-0-12-394296-8.
Academic Press, San Diego, CA, USA.

There has been major growth in understanding immune suppression mechanisms and its relationship to cancer progression and therapy. This book highlights emerging new principles of immune suppression that drive cancer, and it offers radically new ideas about how therapy can be improved by attacking these principles. Following work that firmly establishes immune escape as an essential trait of cancer, recent studies have now defined specific mechanisms of tumor immune suppression. Other recent studies have now also demonstrated how attacking tumors with molecular targeted therapeutics or traditional chemotherapeutic drugs can produce potent anti-tumor effects in preclinical models. This book provides basic, translational, and clinical cancer researchers with an indispensable overview of immune escape as a critical trait in cancer. Furthermore it presents new information which applying specific combinations of immunotherapy and chemotherapy to attack this trait may radically improve the treatment of advanced disease.

Key features of the book: 1. Offers a synthesis of concepts that are useful to cancer immunologists and pharmacologists, who tend to work in disparate fields with little cross-communication; 2. Summarizes the latest insights into how immune escape defines an essential trait of cancer; 3. Describes how molecular-targeted therapeutic drugs or traditional chemotherapy can be combined with immunotherapy to improve anti-tumor efficacy; and how reversing immune suppression by the tumor can cause tumor regression.

Molecular Genetics of Pancreatic Cancer.

Edited by D.M. Simeone, A. Maitra.

2013, pp. 235, Eur 149.79, ISBN: 978-1-4614-6548-5.
Springer Science + Business Media, New York, NY, USA.

Pancreatic cancer is a formidable disease, and advances in early detection and improved therapeutics have been slow to come forth. With new advances in molecular genetics in the field of pancreatic tumorigenesis, it is an opportune time to use these recent discoveries to enhance our understanding of pancreatic cancer biology and to improve outcomes in patients. In this volume, leading experts in the field shed light on these findings describing the mutational landscape of pancreatic cancer, including new inroads into our understanding of familial pancreatic cancer, epidemiology, the biology of K-ras signaling, and the emerging contribution of epigenetic alterations to disease initiation and progression. The distinctive pancreatic cancer-

stroma ecosystem as determined by the dynamic interplay of inflammation, hallmark mutations, EMT, and cancer stem cells is described, and implications of these interactions in the context of development of novel, personalized therapeutic options are explored.

Radiation Therapy for Skin Cancer.

Edited by A.B. Cognetta, Jr., W.M. Mendenhall.

2013, pp. 251, Eur 149.79, ISBN: 978-1-4614-6985-8.

Springer Science + Business Media, New York, NY, USA.

Superficial radiation has been utilized by dermatologists for skin cancer and inflammatory diseases since the early 1900s. The rapid advancements in the field of Radiation Oncology, including electron beam therapy and tomotherapy, alongside the introduction of corticosteroids for dermatologic disorders and advancement in cutaneous surgery, have until recently eclipsed the utilization of this safe and effective modality.

Dermatologists look to our Radiation Oncology colleagues for help with many complex cancer scenarios, such as deeply invasive head and neck squamous cell carcinomas with or without perineural invasion, Merkel Cell Carcinoma, various sarcomas, and certain melanomas ranging from lentigo maligna to metastatic melanoma. This textbook has a greatly expanded section that will serve as a vital reference for all cutaneous oncologists.

Ophthalmic Radiation Therapy. Techniques and Applications.

Edited by A.D. Singh, D.E. Pelayes, S. Seregard, R. Macklis.

2013, pp. 126, Eur 158.00, ISBN: 978-3-318-02440-1.

S. Karger AG, Basel, Switzerland.

This publication, a conjoint effort by ocular oncologists and radiation oncologists, comprises ten chapters covering basic and advanced radiation therapy techniques followed by specific indications by location (uveal, retinal, orbital tumors, eyelid and conjunctival tumors) and complications of radiation therapy. A chapter on investigational use of radiation therapy for age-related macular degeneration is also included.

The contributions are illustrated by photographs, imaging studies, and detailed treatment plans to clearly convey the fundamental concepts. Additional tables, flow diagrams, graphs or charts support the understanding of the subject.

To ocular oncologists, radiation physicists, radiation therapists, and radiation oncologists, this volume is a comprehensive source of authoritative information on the subject of ocular and adnexal radiation therapy.

Therapeutic Strategies in Cancer Biology and Pathology.

Edited by G.V. Sherbet.

2013, pp. 288, Eur 80.00, ISBN: 978-0-12-416570-0.

Elsevier, London, UK.

This volume describes comprehensively the recent intensive efforts directed toward the identification of molecular targets that can provide approaches to the development of novel therapeutic strategies in cancer management.

The focus of the book is on tumour and metastasis-associated genes, viz. those identified with the ability to promote tumour growth and metastasis or suppress metastatic spread, those linked with cellular changes that relate specifically to behavioural alterations of cancer cells in epithelial mesenchymal transition and in the acquisition of invasive faculty. Genes involved in cell cycle regulation and cell proliferation also form a part of the feature in the backdrop of cancer growth and dissemination. The discussion revolves around how appropriate these genes are as molecular targets, how practicable are the constituents of their signal transduction systems as potential candidates and how accessible they are to targeted therapy. It is easy to expatiate on the advantages of being able to do this, but the perceived advantages might be fraught with difficulty, prominent being the influence of signalling cross talk with collateral gene activation or suppression. These themes and allied issues are addressed in the book as an extension of the deployment of growth factors and their receptors which are discussed in the previous work of the author (Sherbet G.V., 2011, Growth factors and their receptors in cell differentiation, cancer and cancer therapy. Elsevier).

The 31 chapters of the book are divided in five sections: Part 1: RNA interference in genetic regulation; Part 2: EMT associated gene targeting; Part 3: Therapeutic deployment of metastasis-associated gene function; Part 4: Genetic determinants of tumors and metastasis suppression; Part 5: Signalling and transcription regulators as prospective candidates in cancer therapy.

This book will be useful to researchers in all fields of biology and medicine, involved in the study and development of anticancer treatment.

Lymphoma. Diagnosis and Treatment.

Edited by A. Younes, B. Coiffier.

2013, pp. 411, Eur 171.19, ISBN: 978-1-62703-407-4.

Springer Science + Business Media, New York, NY, USA.

Recently, understanding the molecular pathogenesis of malignant lymphomas has led to improvement in the diagnostic precision and to the identification of a variety of molecular therapeutic targets. In addition, new drugs have been approved in the US and Europe, resulting in changes in the standard of care of several types of lymphoid malignancies. Comprehensive in scope and developed by a team of internationally renowned authors, Lymphoma: Diagnosis and Treatment provides a timely update on the most important advances in the biology, diagnosis, and therapy of lymphomas. As part of the Current Clinical Oncology series, this volume will be of value to medical oncologists, hematologists, radiation oncologists, and all physicians involved in the care of patients with lymphoid malignancies.

Obesity, Inflammation and Cancer.

Edited by A.J. Dannenberg, N.A. Berger.

2013, pp. 433, Eur 160.49, ISBN: 978-1-4614-6818-9.

Springer Science + Business Media, New York, NY, USA.

In addition to their metabolic and endocrinologic effects, obesity and adipose tissue have now been shown to be associated with chronic low grade inflammation resulting in cellular and humoral factors of which the latter may act by endocrine, paracrine and autocrine mechanisms. These inflammatory mediators have increasingly been suggested as contributing to the obesity link to carcinogenesis and cancer promotion.

This volume focuses on recent developments and cutting edge research pointing to inflammation and inflammatory factors as key mediators of this linkage. It also describes possible strategies for targeting inflammation as an approach to cancer prevention and control. Students, researchers and clinicians, especially those interested in the relation of obesity to cancer and the role of inflammation and its impact on cancer, will find this volume particularly useful. It provides important insight on the role of inflammation in cancer etiology and progression and serve as a platform for developing future research in this area.

The Hastings Center Guidelines for Decisions on Life-Sustaining Treatment and Care Near the End of Life. Second Edition.

By N. Berlinger, B. Jennings, S.M. Wolf.

2013, pp. 240, £64.00, ISBN: 978-0-19-997456-6.

Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

This major new work updates and significantly expands The Hastings Center's 1987 Guidelines on the Termination of Life-Sustaining Treatment and Care of the Dying. Like its predecessor, this second edition will shape the ethical and legal framework for decision-making on treatment and end-of-life care in the United States.

These Guidelines incorporate research and innovation in clinical care, law, and policy. They are written for physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals and are structured for easy reference in difficult clinical situations. They support the work of clinical ethicists, ethics committee members, health lawyers, clinical educators, scholars, and policymakers. They include extensive practical recommendations.