
This book on gastrointestinal cancer has the somewhat misleading subtitle of "radiation therapy." It is misleading because the various chapters are all extremely comprehensive. They usually cover aspects of anatomy, natural history, epidemiology, diagnostic workup, and staging, together with balanced reviews of surgical, chemotherapeutic, and combined modality treatments as well as radiotherapy. It therefore presents a very broad and indeed, unusually, for a multiauthor review book, a surprising up-to-date account of gastrointestinal cancer.

The editors must have given clear guidelines to their authors as all the chapters simply conform to the same pattern, making both reading and random reference easy. Each chapter contains enough and useful bibliography (referenced to 1987) and the illustrations are pertinent and clear. There is some idiosyncratic indexing, as, for example, a whole page for the rare biliary cancers as opposed to half a page for rectal cancer.

Introductory chapters in tumorigenesis, pathology, and radiology set a useful stage for the subsequent individual reviews of cancer in the oesophagus, stomach, pancreas, biliary tract, colon, rectum, and anus. The book concludes with chapters on medical management (chemotherapy) and the follow up of treated patients.

It is difficult to maintain an equally high standard in all chapters but none was found wanting by this reviewer. It then would be invidious to highlight any one. However, it is impressive that, for example, in the chapter on chemotherapy the current excitement about various new techniques in colorectal cancer -adjunct intra-arterial hepatic infusion, use of folinic acid as a modulation of 5-fluorouracil, and adjuvant levamisole with 5-fluorouracil are all mentioned -- anticipating the more definitive data to be expected. This is an impressive book both for reading and for reference. It is a pleasure to recommend it with complete enthusiasm.

NORMAN M BLEEIHAN


Major advances have taken place in recent years in the radiological investigation of the solid organs of the digestive system. Angiography, radionucleide imaging, and ultrasound are techniques that have been available for some time, but have now become refined and are now widely available. Computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, and panoramic radiography and pancreatography, and magnetic resonance imaging are more recent developments that are in fairly widespread clinical practice. All these techniques now play a major part in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the liver, bile ducts, pancreas, and spleen, and this book is a timely addition to the literature on imaging of the digestive system.

Imaging of the Liver, Pancreas and Spleen is edited by Robert Wilkins and Heather Nunnerley, and has contributions from 31 leading experts in the field. The authors have succeeded in producing a comprehensive, well referenced text with a large number of excellent illustrations. Normal anatomy, the methods of investigation, and disorders that involve the liver, biliary system, pancreas, and spleen are dealt with. Some overlap is inevitable in a book that has 31 contributors but the editors with so many reviewers have done an excellent job. It occurs in the description of techniques such as percutaneous transhepatic choanioangiography and endoscopic retrograde choanoangiopancreatography (ERCP). As I read through the chapter on obstructive jaundice, I was surprised to see a statement that ERCP can be performed on an outpatient basis. In the section on the gall bladder, it is incorrectly stated that sodium iodipate is given in a dose of six 3 g capsules, instead of six 500 mg capsules. The calcified or porcelain gall bladder, although an uncommon condition, deserves more attention than one or two sentences. As computed tomography plays a major part in the detection and diagnosis of carcinoma of the pancreas, I think that its role in pancreatic cancer receives less attention than it should.

These are only minor criticisms of an excellent book that should prove to be a useful source of reference for radiologists and clinicians involved in the management of patients with suspected or known disorders of the solid organs of the digestive system.

D NOLAN


In 1961 Hans Popper and Fenton Schaffner, working at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, later to be the Mount Sinai School of Medicine of the City University of New York, inaugurated the 'Progress in Liver Disease' series of monographs. They were the editors and their friends the contributors. The volumes rapidly became the last word in an innovative series of books on liver disease in the world. No serious hepatologist could afford to be without them. Over the years eight volumes have appeared and now the ninth, which fully maintains the high standards of its predecessors. Sadly, it is published without the personal supervision of the senior editor, Hans Popper, who was the father of modern hepatology and who died in 1988. In this volume Dr Popper's memory is perpetuated by Fenton Schaffner, his loyal co-editor, and by 75 contributors. In such a feast of hepatology it is difficult to select particular topics. They include a full discussion of hepatitis C and E viruses and of liver transplantation. Basic topics such as liver gene expression, eicosanoids, hepatic calcium metabolism, and bilirubin glucuronidation are included.

The presentation is excellent. The illustrations are prolific and clear. The price is reasonable given the breadth of material included and the size of the book. This ninth Progress in Liver Diseases will become a classic in the field. It will be the first monograph of our century, when other monographs of liver disease are long forgotten.

SHEILA SHERLOCK

NOTES

Course for radiologists

The Leeds Gastroenterology Course for Radiologists, 1-5 July 1991, will be held at St James's University Hospital, Leeds, England. Information: Miss Pat Kentley, Level 7, Worsley Medical Building, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, England. Tel 0532 431751.

6th World Congress in Ultrasound

The 6th World Congress in Ultrasound will be held in Copenhagen, from 1-6 September 1991. Congress secretariat: 6th World Congress in Ultrasound, Spadille Congress Service, Sorumvej 3, DK-3100 Hornbæk, Denmark.