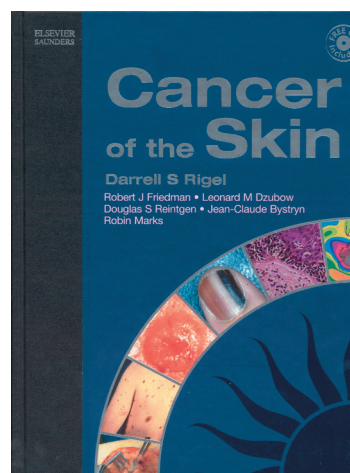


Rigel DS, Friedman RJ, Dzubow LM, Reintgen DS, Bysrtryn J, Marks R, editors. Cancer of the Skin. Philadelphia: Elsevier Saunders; 2005. Format: hard cover, one volume. Pages 711, parts seven, chapters 56. ISBN 0-7216-0544-3.



Here is a new edition of the book *Cancer of the Skin*. A decade has elapsed since a group of editors (Friedman RJ, Darell S, Rigel DS and Kopf A) published the seminal comprehensive text entitled *Cancer of the Skin*. The current text is an update on the enormous progress that has been made at all levels including clinical, therapeutic, epidemiologic, genetic and histopathologic as well as basic sciences with emphasis on neoplastic cellular biology.

Every year there are over one million newly diagnosed cases of skin cancer in the USA, more than all other cancers combined. One in five Americans will develop at least one skin cancer during their lifetime. Similar rates are found in many other countries worldwide.

The extensive topic of dermatologic oncology is divided into seven parts. The book has resulted from the joint efforts of 102 authors from all over the world, all of them renowned authorities and experts in particular fields of dermatologic oncology, while the editors have done an excellent work on harmonizing the various contributions in terms of contents and wording. Each part is concluded by future outlook, presenting prospects for the time to come.

The first part is dedicated to basic skin cancer biology and epidemiology. The latest knowledge and concepts on the skin cancer biology, genetic aspect of the disease, melanocyte biology, etiologic factors (environmental and biologic) in skin cancer, current attitude to the use of photoprotecting agents, and role of primary and secondary prevention of malignant skin tumors are presented in seven chapters. The chapter on the genetic aspect of malignant skin tumors is focused on data on familial melanoma (CDKN2A and CDK4 gene

defects), RAF and RAS gene mutations in melanoma, and PTEN gene defects in melanoma. In the course of future study and with application of increasingly sophisticated technology, novel skin genes will be identified. As novel skin genes are identified and studied, a more comprehensive understanding of the genetic and molecular basis of skin cancer will be achievable. Ultimately, this may permit development of novel therapies that will target specific genes and molecular pathways involved in skin cancer.

The second part deals with non-melanoma skin cancer, describing precancerous lesions, basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, bowenoid papulosis and epidermodysplasia verruciformis. All chapters are accompanied by a long list of references, as many as 307 in the chapter on basal cell carcinoma.

Melanoma is a topic dealt with in the third part of the book. The first chapter of this part is characteristically entitled *The Many Faces of Melanoma*, illustrating the wide variability of the melanoma clinical picture. It is followed by chapters on the importance of early detection of melanoma, factors influencing survival in melanoma patients, dysplastic nevus, congenital melanocytic nevus, treatment of melanoma, melanoma in pregnancy, and indications for genetic testing for melanoma. The chapter on the pathology of melanoma – new concepts describes current possibilities offered by histologic diagnosis and immunohistochemical staining for S-100 protein, HMB-45, MART-1, tyrosinase, NKIC3, pan melanoma cocktail (HMB 45, MART-1 and tyrosinase) and CD10 antigen. The use of cytogenetic analysis in the diagnosis of melanoma is also presented. The main challenges regarding the diagnosis and treatment of melano-

ma lie at histologic level. As noted throughout this manuscript, there may be significant difficulties in rendering an accurate diagnosis of melanoma by histology. In the future, such approaches will be available that will allow for a more accurate diagnosis to be achieved quickly using biometric assays and techniques that can be used in conjunction with routine histology. With intense educational efforts that are ongoing, it is hoped that the ultimate goals of earlier diagnosis and prevention will be attained.

The fourth part of the book is dedicated to some less common malignant skin tumors: adnexal carcinoma, Paget disease, skin sarcoma, Merkel cell carcinoma, malignant vascular skin tumors, and malignant skin tumors in patients with HIV infection. This part also covers malignant skin lymphoma (mycosis fungoides, Sézary syndrome), genetic disorders predisposing to cutaneous malignancy (basal cell nevus syndrome, xeroderma pigmentosum, dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa), dermatologic manifestation in internal malignancy, Spitz nevus, keratoacanthoma, and pseudolymphoma. Due account is also given of cutaneous carcinogenesis related to dermatologic therapy, describing malignant skin tumors consequential to dermatologic therapy (PUVA, immunosuppressants, cytostatics).

The fifth part of the book entitled *New Approaches to Diagnosis* is especially impressive, extensively describing the use of dermatoscopy in the diagnosis of melanoma, computer aided diagnosis of cutaneous melanoma, and confocal microscopy in the diagnosis of skin cancer.

The sixth part deals with therapeutic consideration in skin cancer management. It begins with a chapter on biopsy techniques, so designed to be highly useful in daily practice. In therapeutic approach to skin cancer, the starting point are simple techniques such as curettage and electrodesiccation, and cryosurgery. These are followed by

data on the use of photodynamic therapy in the treatment of malignant skin tumors, laser therapy, and use of immunomodulators. A special chapter is dedicated to indications and practical performance of Mohs' surgery, surgical excision of skin cancer. Another chapter deals with regional lymph node surgery for patients with malignant melanoma. Lymphatic mapping and sentinel lymph node biopsy have become the standard of care for nodal staging of patients with malignant melanoma. Then there are chapters on reconstructive surgery for skin cancer, radiation therapy, vaccine therapy for melanoma, and treatment of disseminated melanoma.

The last, seventh part of the book refers to other aspects of skin cancer, with due commentary on indoor tanning, importance of photodocumentation, and medicolegal aspects of skin cancer.

A broad array of cancers of the skin are included in this comprehensive book. Special emphasis is placed on cutaneous cancers that are particularly prevalent (e.g., basal cell carcinoma) and those which are responsible for highest mortality (e.g., melanoma). In order to relay to the reader in the most vivid way, almost all photographs are printed in full color. Clinical and histologic images are of high quality.

The major emphasis is placed on the diagnosis and management of cutaneous malignancies so that the reader is provided with the most advanced diagnostic and therapeutic measures available to date for each type of malignant skin tumors.

The *Cancer of the Skin* will serve as a valuable source not only for dermatologists but also to all those who deal with the consequences of malignant tumors of the skin. The book should find its place in the library of each individual dermatologist as well as of dermatologic departments.

Aida Pašić, MD, PhD