

BOOK REVIEWS

The John Hopkins Breast Cancer Handbook for Health Care Professionals

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In America, as in many other developed countries of the world, men and women are living longer after a diagnosis of breast cancer. The advances in screening, early detection and improvement in treatments for breast cancer has seen an increase in five and 10 year survival rates.

The aim of this book is to provide knowledge to primary care physicians and others involved in women's health care, with a specific focus on breast health and breast cancer, and the medical and psychological wellbeing of the breast cancer patient post active treatment.

The authors have arranged the book chapters in a step-by-step manner to ensure that all aspects of the breast cancer journey are comprehensively explained, from how to choose a breast cancer unit, long-term follow-up and survivorship care, through to recurrence and metastatic disease.

The chapter authors are all specialists in their fields and have explained complex issues and treatment modalities in

a succinct and informative manner. In particular, the chapter on monoclonal antibody therapy gives a good up-to-date account of the latest targeted treatments. The information on the current use of technology, including MRI, will assist practitioners in explaining the benefits and limitations of such tools in the management of their patients.

The book contains a good number of useful tables, figures and in particular algorithms for quick reference purposes, as well as frequently asked questions at the end of each chapter. There is excellent use of clinical trial data from the United Kingdom and Canada in particular, to support many of the recommendations and advice.

The majority of the statistics are American and some of the specific recommendations would need to be adapted to the reader's own evidence-based protocols, however this is a minor and somewhat expected limitation of a book of this type.

There is some inevitable repetition due in part to the design of the chapters, but it would not deter me from recommending the book to the preferred target audience of primary care physicians, advanced breast cancer nurses and general cancer physicians who require a good current knowledge of breast health and in particular breast cancer.

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