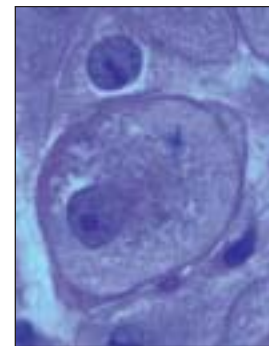


# Book Review

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**Leonard B. Saltz, ed. *Colorectal Cancer: Multimodality Management*. Totowa, NJ: Humana Press Inc; 2002. 854 pages. Hardcover, \$195.00 US.**

*Colorectal Cancer: Multimodality Management* is an admirable and necessary addition to the medical literature. Its focus is directed at subspecialists involved in the clinical care of patients afflicted with this specific disease. Modeled somewhat after *Cancer; Principles and Practice of Oncology* (DeVita VI, et al. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins), this reference textbook has the same format of chapters authored by experts in their field. As its brief is narrower than that of *Cancer; Principles and Practice of Oncology*, it has the advantage of being less overwhelming, thus more readable and actually more comprehensive.

The book is conveniently divided into six sections. In most cases, the editor has done an admirable job in avoiding repetition among the different authors. The first section covering epidemiology and prevention is perhaps the strongest, with each author doing an excellent job of distilling an increasingly complex field of knowledge into short, readable chapters. The chapter on screening and surveillance is outstanding, with a succinct and practical review of our current knowledge; it would be a worthy addition to any medical student's required reading.

The second section focuses on diagnostic and therapeutic radiology. This combination harkens back to earlier days when these two medical disciplines were combined as one. The chapters on virtual colonoscopy, endorectal ultrasound, magnetic resonance, and nuclear medicine imaging deal competently with evolving fields. Given the limitations of space afforded the authors, they ably review areas that are increasingly confusing to clinicians reviewing the current medical literature. The authors use photographs to illustrate points, and they use tables judiciously to review the literature in the field. Given the significant advances in the field of imaging and screening colorectal cancers (perhaps technology is advancing here faster than any other aspect of therapy of colorectal cancer management), it will be fascinating to see what this section reads in 10 years' time (hopefully this book will be the first edition of many more to come). The therapeutic

radiation oncology sections provide well-illustrated and surprisingly comprehensive reviews of state-of-the-art management of the role of radiation in surgically resectable and locally unresectable rectal cancers. Somewhat surprisingly, given the limitations of space a book like this has, there is an entire chapter on radiation therapy for hepatic metastases.

The chapters dealing with the surgical management of colorectal cancer represent the largest section in the book and in some cases are unnecessarily detailed and repetitive. I believe there is too much emphasis on the experimental procedures of laparoscopic colectomy (the longest chapter in this section is given to surgery) and peritonectomy for carcinomatosis, and there is too little emphasis on total mesorectal excision. The three chapters on the management of early-stage rectal cancer hepatic and pulmonary metastasectomy are very informative.

With the immense amount of publications in the field of the medical oncology management of colorectal cancer, the chapters regarding chemotherapeutic agents present a readable and balanced review of the history and the more important developments in this discipline. Chapters are devoted to each of the drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for this disease, in addition to one on adjuvant therapy and regional perfusion therapy. A gem of a short review hides in the back: a chapter on molecular markers of chemotherapy resistance. This chapter hints at the significant progress sure to take place in this field of development in the future.

Rounding out the book with a holistic approach is a section on supportive management and a final section covering the development of new treatment strategies. Coming at the end of the book, these sections might receive less attention, but the discussions of work being done in molecularly targeted approaches and vaccine strategies alone are worth the price of the book.

Given the limitations imposed by the format, this book accomplishes the task of providing not only a comprehensive review of the current state of the art, but also a window to future developments. Most of the

gains in the management in colorectal cancer have grown out of an integrated multimodality approach to this disease. For this reason, this book is a worthy addition to the library of medical oncologists, surgeons, radiation oncologists, radiologists, and nurses who are involved in the practice of integrated care of patients with colorectal cancer.

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