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HEAD AND NECK CANCER

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MD Anderson Manual of Medical Oncology

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DETAILS:

HM Kantarjian, RA Wolff, CA Koller

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The *MD Anderson Manual of Medical Oncology* has, according to the editors, been written as a hands-on resource for oncologists that presents a bird's eye view of medical oncology as it is currently practised at this institution. It was written primarily from the perspective of the medical oncologist and although MD Anderson claims to practise a multidisciplinary approach, it is void of information in some sections covering radiotherapy and surgery.

The manual covers 13 sections: leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma, blood and marrow transplantation, lung cancer, head and neck cancer, gastrointestinal carcinomas, breast cancer, gynaecologic malignancies, genitourinary carcinomas, miscellaneous tumours, supportive care, palliative care and symptom management and long term survival, with a total of 44 chapters. The lengths of the chapters are variable and range from as few as eight pages (autologous transplantation) to 40 pages for cervical cancer. Haematological malignancies occupy the first 270 pages of the manual.

The text demonstrates a rationale for patient care that is evidence based, with MD Anderson showing their biases as they apply to cancer biology and therapy. They have endeavoured to articulate the rationale of ongoing clinical trials and the importance of clinical investigation.

The manual contains a plethora of tabulated data and graphics, pathology figures, illustrative imaging, algorithms in the form of flowcharts and diagrams to provide the reader with a practical guide to the diagnostic and therapeutic strategies used at MD Anderson. The layout of some pages is somewhat messy, with some pages containing too many graphics. Some of the pathology and radiology images are poorly replicated giving them a blurred appearance.

Overall, the manual is worth a look at, but I am not convinced that it is a must for every oncology department.

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