

## Psychopharmacology in Oncology and Palliative Care – A practical manual

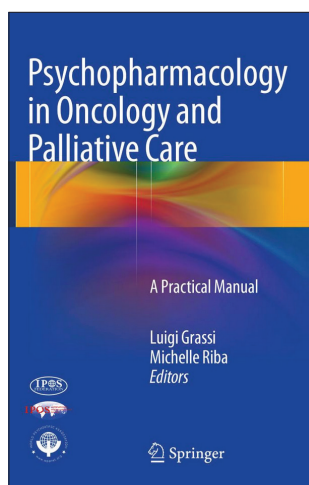
Editors: Grassi L, Riba M. Published by: Springer. ISBN 978-3-642-40133-6. Price: £72.00.

This is a multi-author book, whose intended audience is doctors working with cancer patients, including oncologists, surgical oncologists and general practitioners. The principal intent is to provide them with a guide to the recognition and pharmacological management of psychiatric disorders in oncology patients.

The book is generally readable although the text is dense and there is occasionally some idiosyncratic language and sentence construction. Each chapter is individually and extensively referenced and there are many useful summary tables and boxes. The index has been well compiled.

The book is divided into three parts. The first comprises seven chapters and addresses general aspects of the use of drugs in psychiatric and related problems arising in oncology. Chapter 1 is a general overview while Chapter 2 looks at pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. In Chapters 3 and 4, the focus is on assessment and diagnosis. Chapter 5 discusses the importance of communication and some of the aids to enhance clinician-patient interaction. In Chapter 6 the authors explain the way patients react individually to cancer-related events and they attempt to help the clinician to assess whether medication or some other intervention such as psychotherapy is most appropriate. Chapter 7 explores some complementary therapies and their integration into cancer care, particularly as an alternative to pharmacological intervention.

The middle section of the book contains nine chapters, most of which look at the recognition and medical management of specific psychiatric and psychological conditions. In Chapters 8



and 9 the authors discuss anxiety, depression and stress-related disorders. The use of psychotropic drug treatment of somatoform disorders, such as pain, fatigue and anorexia, experienced by cancer patients is covered in Chapter 10. Chapter 11 is about bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder while Chapter 12 explores the treatment of delirium. Chapters 13 and 14 are about the management of psychotic conditions and sleep disorders. Chapter 15 covers substance abuse, including prescription medicines and alcohol, in oncology.

The final part of the book comprises six chapters and the first three of these (Chapters 17 – 19) deal with psychiatric emergencies in cancer patients and psychopharmacology in both younger patients and in the elderly. Chapter 20 looks at sedation for

psychological distress at the end of life, Chapter 21 at research in psychopharmacology and finally Chapter 23 explores diverse ethical issues around this kind of treatment.

In summary, this book comprehensively covers the use of psychotropic drugs in the treatment of psychiatric disorders in oncology, as well as addressing their use in ameliorating some of the common side effects of cancer and its treatment. It aims to help the oncologist recognise and manage these conditions and to interact effectively with their patients. Although the price is quite high, the book would be a useful purchase for any clinician involved in the care of cancer patients.

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### Blue Faery Award for Excellence in Liver Cancer Research

Submission period began October 1, 2015.

Blue Faery is excited to announce our annual Blue Faery Award for Excellence in Liver Cancer Research. This award honours one researcher who has made significant contributions in the advancement of scientific knowledge in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention or understanding of liver cancer.



More information is located here:  
<http://www.bluefaery.org/BlueFaeryAward.htm>

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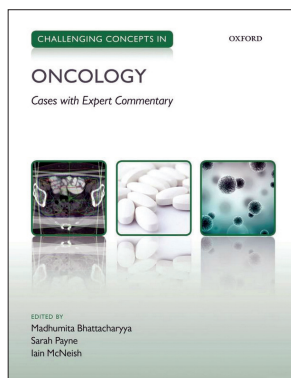
## Challenging Concepts in Oncology – Cases with Expert Commentary

*Edited by Madhumita Bhattacharyya, Sarah Payne, Iain McNeish. Published by: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-968888-3. Price: £49.99.*

This 298 page paperback book portrays 25 clinical cases of common cancers and common cancer related complications. It is written primarily for medical and clinical oncology trainees, with the MRCP3 examination and the FRCR in mind. The book is also useful for more senior doctors hoping to gain an overview of the management of other tumour sites.

All of the 24 experts and 28 contributors to the book are from the UK, reflecting current practice within Great Britain.

For each case there is a presentation or case history followed by treatment or discussion. Throughout the text are interspersed many blue boxes such as learning points, clinical tips, expert comments and evidence base. The diagnostic and investigative features of particular cancers are displayed in the learning point boxes. The evidence base boxes displays the relevant clinical trial data using an easy to read bullet-point format. Dark blue boxes contain the "expert comment" and are placed throughout the chapter; however I found the text against a dark background difficult to read. The conclusion of the chapter is presented as a "final word from the expert" and summarises the current situation for that tumour site. Each chapter is reviewed by a national/



international expert. All of the chapters are well referenced.

The range of topics discussed was large and, broadly representative of every day clinical practice. I found the clinical scenarios to be interesting and thought provoking.

Overall I found the book pleasurable to read, it did not appear to be intimidating or daunting; rather the opposite. It allows the reader to test him or herself against the authors. The reader may use this book in preparation for examinations as the boxes present a lot of up-to-date information in an easy to read format, which can be used as revision aides. My only

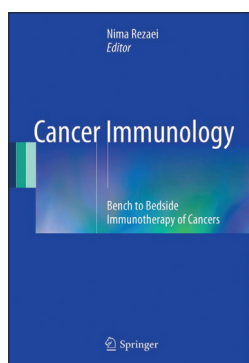
criticisms; were that the photographs were black and white, whereas colour photographs would be more helpful especially for showing pathology slides and rashes. NICE guidance of cancer treatment which often dominates and determines management plans of cancer in the UK did not feature prominently in the book and that the font size within the boxes was rather small. In summary this is a useful book especially for those preparing for examinations.

*Dr Karin Baria,  
Retired Consultant Clinical Oncologist.*

## Cancer Immunology – A Translational Medicine Context

*Editor: Nima Rezaei. Published by: Springer. ISBN: 978-3-662-44005-6. Cost: ebook £136.50. Hardcover: £171.00.*

This hardback text of 597 pages is the second of a three volume series on cancer immunology. This book focuses on the immunopathology of cancers. There are 85 world-wide contributors to this book, the forward being written by Francesco Marincola. This book is written for those researchers and clinicians who want to move the field forward at a clinical and scientific level. I found this book to be a highly specialist text on cancer immunology. There are 26 chapters most of which are concerned with the detailed, scientific aspects of cancer immunology. The initial chapters are concerned with the scientific aspects of cancer immunology; e.g. apoptosis and cancer, role of cytokines in tumour immunity the latter deal with more clinical matters. For instance Chapter 18: Primary immunodeficiencies and cancer discusses the interplay between primary immunodeficiencies; e.g. X-linked Agammaglobulinaemia and the formation of malignancy. As the life expectancy of such patients increases so does the risk of developing cancer, partly due to involvement of chronic antigen stimulation, oncogenic viruses, and impaired immunity. The changes seen in the innate and adaptive immune systems with advancing age are explored as a mechanism for developing cancer, in chapter 19: Immunosenescence, Oxidative Stress and Cancers. Low grade inflammation seen with aging is postulated as a common factor linking diseases of old age and genomic instability, metabolism and immunity are interlinked in the



formation of cancer and other inflammatory related diseases.

Chapter 20: Nutrition, Immunity and Cancers, provides an explanation of how the imbalance of cytokine production and neuropeptide and adipokine dysfunction has major consequences for the nutritional aspects of the cancer patient. It also discusses the dietary causation of cancer (obesity) and the role of minerals, vitamin intake and the immune status.

Chapter 26: Immunohistochemistry of cancers. I found this to be a comprehensive and clinically relevant chapter on the use of immunohistochemistry

(IHC) in diagnostic pathology; helping to provide evidence of cellular lineage and sub-typing of lesions and malignancies. This chapter provides the reader with examples of colour photographs of IHC of all tissue types and shows how prognostic and therapeutic applications have become the norm, enabling targeted therapies to be used in treatment of tumours. This chapter is really useful for the clinician and has direct clinical applications.

In summary this is a specialist text on cancer immunology, it is well written, illustrated with lots of colour photographs, diagrams and tables, and the chapters are very well referenced. I feel that this book is an asset to researchers and clinicians.

*Dr Karin Baria,  
Retired Consultant Clinical Oncologist.*