

BOOK REVIEWS

Current and Emerging Issues in Cancer Pain: Research and Practice. Edited by R. C. Chapman and K. M. Foley. New York, Raven Press, 1993. Pages: 441. Price: \$140.00.

Traditionally, cancer pain has been studied by many subspecialists involved in medicine. Psychiatrists, oncologists, psychologists, anesthesiologists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, and pharmacologists all have studied the pain response from their unique perspective, and each field has contributed to the advancement of pain research by applying unique knowledge and principles. In July of 1992, the third annual Bristol-Meyers Squibb Symposium on Pain Research, entitled "Current and Emerging Issues in Cancer Pain: Research and Practice," was held to bring together leaders in the study of pain medicine. This symposium (and this text, which consists of monographs written for the symposium) excelled in integrating the research issues of a wide variety of areas applicable both to the basic scientist as well as to the clinician.

The text has 26 separate monographs, all written by experts in their respective fields. Each author reviews one area of pain research, analyzes the current research in that area, and discusses the relevant controversies. There appear to be several unstated goals of the text. First, it provides a forum for discussion between those representing the various subspecialties who study pain medicine. Second, it serves as a resource, with up-to-date examination of the literature in diverse areas. Finally, it allows for critical analysis of each field and suggestions for future research. The book accomplishes these goals. The choice of topics and authors is outstanding, and each author's review is comprehensive. Topics range from depression in cancer patients (Chapter 1) to pharmacokinetic-pharmacodynamic relationships of opioid analgesics (Chapter 12). Although each monograph addresses pain in patients with cancer, the broader implications of research into benign pain states is frequently examined. For example, Chapter 13, "Measurement of Cancer Pain via Patient Self Report," by Jensen and Karoly, has a good review of assessment techniques that are used

in cancer pain. These techniques can be used for the evaluation of "benign" pain.

Although this text was dedicated to John Bonica, M.D., for his career long dedication to the treatment of pain, ironically it does not address the role of interventional approaches to cancer pain. The World Health Organization has indicated that in 85-90% of patients with cancer pain, it should be possible to control their pain with oral analgesics alone.¹ This suggests that a significant minority of patients may benefit from adjuvant techniques for the treatment of pain.² Research addressing the appropriate selection and timing of interventional approaches should have been included in such a comprehensive text.

Overall, this text serves as a valuable reference guide for those interested in the study, treatment, and future research of pain in patients with cancer. It will be a valuable addition to all pain researchers' libraries.

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