

Cutaneous Malignancies. A surgical perspective by Brian R. Gastman. ISBN: 9781626231474. Price: €179.99/\$199.99. Thieme Gruppe, 2017.

This 272 pages hard back book on skin cancer management is aimed at all those treating skin cancer, whatever their specialty, and therefore the target groups includes plastic surgery, dermatopathology, dermatology, surgery, radiation oncology and otolaryngology.

It boasts 420 illustrations over 12 chapters covering skin cancer prevention and detection; treatment of the 3 commonest skin cancers (basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma); as well as some of the rarer cutaneous malignancies. The highlights – for me at least – include chapters on Mohs micrographic surgery, the key roles for both expert dermatopathology and radiotherapy in managing skin cancers and, with the increasing use of immunotherapies in skin cancer management, there is a useful chapter on the surgical implications of these agents. The role of sentinel lymph node biopsy and completion lymphadenectomy in melanoma is discussed, but without the interim results from the Multicenter Selective Lymphadenectomy II trial. The recommendations and interpretation of the data regarding sentinel lymph node biopsy may be relevant in the USA but is not shared by many of us in the rest of the world.

As is to be expected with authors from different specialties and backgrounds, there is some overlap in the topics covered, but the contrasting opinions based on the authors' interpretation of the evidence makes interesting reading. This was especially notable for the discussion of the role of Mohs' micrographic surgery in skin cancer management, perhaps because this technique is usually performed by a dermatologist rather than a plastic surgeon.

There are plenty of clinical images in the book, but some look like they have been taken on a mobile phone with poor lighting rather than by an expert photographer with a prosumer camera. As the book has a heavy surgical

slant, it would have been preferable when showing surgical reconstructions to see images of the pre-op lesion, the surgical defect and repair along with the long-term results. This would be helpful for both surgeons and patients – acting as a resource for the latter by showing what can be realistically expected in expert hands.

There is also an electronic version of the book with 4 videos but unfortunately it requires legacy software, namely Adobe Flash player, which is now largely deprecated on mobile devices. The online book is not particularly user friendly with a PDF format which means you can't click to images/figures/references and there is no scroll function leading to difficulty navigating pages. The video contents include a cervicofacial rotation flap, a multi-stage paramedian forehead flap for a nasal defect, sentinel lymph node biopsy and completion inguinal lymphadenectomy. In the video of the multi-stage forehead flap, the pedicle is interestingly based on the contralateral side due to the Doppler flow being superior on that side and is mentioned as being a '4 or 5 stage' flap but it seems stages 3 to 5 are based on scar revision. Unfortunately, the videos cannot be accessed directly from the online book, instead requiring registration at www.mediacycenter.com and entering of a separate code.

Given the authorship, and that the ethos is largely that of management of skin cancer by non-dermatologists, I assume the book is largely geared towards the plastic surgery audience in the USA. If you have a major subspecialist interest in skin cancer then it may well be worth having a copy of this book in your departmental library – if for no other reason than to provide insights into the breadth of clinical opinion out there – but, before buying it, consider looking at Darrell Rigel's second edition 'Cancer of the Skin', and June Robinson's third edition 'Surgery of the skin: procedural dermatology' first. I would suggest these latter two titles should probably remain you and your residents first port of call.

Lisa Naysmith
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