

Breast cancer is a very complex disease to understand and to treat. For physicians treating breast cancer around the world, the dramatic and rapid advances in breast cancer management, among all oncology specialties, has created an urgent need for up-to-date educational information that synthesizes the plethora of scientific publications in the world literature. Breast cancer has become a truly multimodality treatment, and the majority of breast cancer patients benefit from treatments from multiple specialties in various combinations and sequences. In addition, there are rapid advances in molecular and genetic diagnostics that are requiring physicians to adapt a multimodality treatment plan as “personalized therapy”. Finally, there are chapters addressing important issues on breast cancer prevention interventions and “quality of life” issues such as breast reconstruction, premature menopause, and sexuality, fertility, and sleep disturbances. Written by global experts from North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, this textbook is thus a valuable resource for all physicians and health care workers who manage the myriad of issues confronting the breast cancer patient.

This comprehensive textbook addresses the entire range of breast cancer from in situ disease to advanced metastatic disease. Chapter subjects on breast cancer include: epidemiology, Imaging, Surgical treatment, endocrine treatment, chemotherapy, targeted therapies, radiotherapy, genetic/molecular testing and prognostic factors. It includes excellent and practical chapters on molecular and genetic markers, reconstructive breast surgery, intraoperative radiation therapy, symptom management, survivorship issues, and challenging patient scenarios, such as breast cancer in young patients and those who are also pregnant.

Management of breast cancer is a global problem and the solutions are from global collaborations, not only in research (both clinical and translational) but also in educational collaborations where the “collective wisdom” of breast cancer experts from different specialties and from different nations can better present the practical “real world” application to the many presentations of breast cancer around the world.

Breast cancer is a major threat to health throughout the world. The Global Cancer Statistics (GLOBLCAN) published in February 2015 showed that there were around 1.67 million women worldwide suffering from breast cancer, more than 500,000 patients died of breast cancer, and the incidence and mortality all ranked first among cancers in women.

In the United States, breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women, except for skin cancers. About 1 in 8 (12%) women in the US will develop invasive breast cancer during their lifetime. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, exceeded only by lung cancer. The American Cancer Society estimates that in the United States (for 2016), 246,660 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women, 61,000 new cases of carcinoma in situ will be diagnosed, and 40,450 women will die from breast cancer. Death rates from breast cancer have been declining since about 1989, with larger decreases in women younger than 50. These decreases are believed to be the result of earlier detection through screening and increased awareness, as well as improved treatment. At this time there are more than 2.8 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

In China, it has recently been estimated that 268,600 Chinese women developed breast cancer and 69,500 died of breast cancer in the year 2015 (Chen W. 2016). Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in China for women at ages 30 to 59 years, and breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women younger than 45 years (Chen w. 2016).

We are grateful for this opportunity to publish these book chapters and thank the editors and publishers of AME Publishing Company for their outstanding job in bringing this comprehensive textbook to completion. We hope those who read these chapters will gain new insights about the similarities and differences in how we deliver breast cancer care. As we share more information and collaborate together on joint projects, the cancer patients will benefit wherever they live as they seek contemporary treatment in the breast cancer at all stages.

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