BOOK REVIEW

Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Guidelines, and Recommendations for Practice 4th Edition

Editors: Martha Polovich, Mikaela Olsen, and Kristine B. LeFebvre
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Reviewed by Eileen Wagner, Kristy Elliot, Wayne Enders, Janice Chobanuk and Amanda Tsui

The book entitled Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Guidelines, and Recommendations for Practice, 4th ed., is a comprehensive textbook focusing on pharmacological oncology treatments and nursing practices. This book is an excellent resource for novices and experts and oncology nurses to those in clinical educator roles. The team of authors and editors includes a wide range of oncology experts including oncology nurses, managers, educators, and pharmacists. Although most of the writers are from various centres in the United States, there is one Canadian author.

The textbook is composed of 11 chapters that cover an overview of cancer and treatments to principles of anti-neoplastic therapy and biotherapy, to nursing considerations about patient education and competence in chemotherapy administration. This wide-ranging array of topics also includes pre-treatment care, post-treatment care, sequencing agents, and side effects of cancer treatments. Each chapter includes diagrams, tables, and an extensive reference list. For example, chapter four on biotherapy includes a clear conceptual diagram illustrating the cancer treatment and the mechanisms of actions in the cell cycle including monoclonal antibodies and tyrosine kinase inhibitors. Other attributes of this textbook include the patient education sections. The authors identify a broad range of barriers to patient learning that includes psychosocial, physical, and cultural issues, as well as methods for overcoming these barriers. For instance, there is a well-written section on barriers to adherence to oral chemotherapy and strategies to improve adherence. In addition to addressing the literacy level of the patient and learning style, the authors also include short-term and long-term patient education outcomes.

The editors organized the content of the book in a well thought out manner. It is easy to locate the topics of interest. For example, peri-rectal cellulitis can be easily located in chapter nine under side effects of cancer therapy, as well as in the index at the back of the book. The section covering the topic of peri-rectal cellulitis is organized into the following categories (a) definition, (b) pathophysiology, (c) incidence, (d) risk factors, (e) assessment, and lastly, (f) patient and family education.

This 479-page paperback book is reasonably priced. However, it is not as sturdy as a hardcover textbook. Overall, we would recommend this guideline to any nurse clinician working in an oncology setting.

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