

# Gynecologic Oncology



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# Foreword

The early efforts of the men and women dedicated to understanding the natural history and treatment of cancers unique to women have been well chronicled. Through inventive designs and careful follow-up, these pioneers demonstrated the efficacy of radical surgery and radiotherapy in treating cervix cancer, chemotherapy in gestational trophoblastic disease, screening cytology for early detection of cervix cancer and other seminal offerings. However, over the past two decades, the remarkable advances in science and technology have transformed our knowledge and the management of these diseases. Exemplary of such are the benefits derived from the enhanced understanding of at-risk populations and tumor biology, the development of vaccines and pathway specific pharmacologic agents, the application of sophisticated imaging modalities and the use of videoscopic surgical techniques. This is indeed a most exciting time for the multidisciplinary specialty of gynecologic oncology recognizing the nearly infinite opportunities that exist with regard to future discoveries, their application and subsequent outcomes assessments including the effect on the quality of life of women with these cancers.

Apropos to the recent evolutionary changes in the specialty and the opportunities and challenges thereby presented, this textbook, *Gynecologic Oncology*,

edited by Gheorghe Peltecu and Claes Trope is certainly timely. The editor's original intent was to create a reference for standardization of the detection and treatment of gynecologic malignancies by practitioners in Romania. However, the ingenuity in crafting the contents for each of the sections and assembling an international team of authors with recognized subject-specific expertise has generated a comprehensive textbook. Section I addresses the principles and basic science applications that have revolutionized the mechanisms employed for prevention, early detection and treatment of gynecologic cancers. Section II details the state-of-the-art assessment and therapeutic modalities applicable to the specific malignancies that are associated with each of the organ sites. Collectively, Sections III-V illustrate recent approaches and techniques that have markedly decreased treatment associated morbidity and enhanced the quality of life for women during the entire episode of cancer care. Accordingly, this comprehensive text will provide the practicing oncologists and students interested in gynecologic cancers the latest referenced scientific and technologic information to facilitate their understanding of the epidemiology, etiology, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancers unique to the female reproductive tract.

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# Preface

It is not just any gynecologist that is able to treat a malignant gynecological condition.

A gynecologist who takes on the responsibility of providing therapy for a malignant gynaecological condition will need to be not merely a technical expert but also a physician having excellent knowledge of tumour biology, of the principles of radiotherapy and chemotherapy, able to integrate the multidisciplinary therapy of cancer.

More than 30 years ago, the foundation of the Society of Gynecological Oncology was being laid in the United States. The experience accumulated by this subspecialty of gynecology has clearly shown that patient care and research are best performed by a multidisciplinary team of specialists that should include at least one gynecological oncology surgeon, a medical oncologist, a radiotherapist and a pathologist. A plastic surgeon, a psychologist and a specialist in pain therapy could also be added to the team.

In countries where gynecological oncology is not yet a subspecialty, the need for it to be recognized as well as the need for specialist training are more stringent than ever before.

The prevailing argument in favour of additional specialization in gynecological oncology is based on the finding that a larger amount of surgical work practically translates into improved quality of care and into better patient evolution.

The history of the North-American gynecological oncology as a subspecialty can serve as a develop-

ment model. A specialist in gynecological oncology should be able to independently perform radical gynecological surgery, including operations on the urinary and gastrointestinal tracts, related to the evolution of genital cancers.

Continuing medical education should be regarded as a vital necessity, as the area of oncology and that of oncological surgery are permanently changing. Surgical radicalism tends to be replaced by conservative surgical procedures that do not jeopardize the intention of curing the disease. The early stages of vulvar and cervical cancer are just examples in this respect.

Standardization is an extremely important element in raising the quality of health care. Ideally, the promotion of best diagnosis and treatment methods and their practical implementation are achieved by developing and implementing clinical guidelines.

Our book is published at an important point in time, when Romania is making efforts to reach international standards in the medical field. We hope it will contribute to achieving that goal.

A prerequisite for providing good quality information is setting up a team of reputed specialists who are able to clearly convey useful information for the clinician's practical work.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those people who have contributed to the making of this book through their efforts and generosity, and we hope to meet our readers' expectations.

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