The Molecular Biology of Cancer

S Pelengaris and M Khan (eds)
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This is the first edition of *The Molecular Biology of Cancer*. The book is aimed at advanced-year science and medical undergraduates, those about to embark on post-graduate studies in molecular biology and clinicians working in the area of oncology. It is a little too simplistic for those performing research in the area of molecular biology.

The book comprises 18 chapters starting with a succinct key points summary of the chapter (the best feature of the book) and ending with three to five questions in true/false format to check understanding of the areas covered. Each chapter is set out as a series of headings and subheadings, without numbers. At times it is difficult to follow, as the text is lengthy and frequently refers back to previous topics.

The first five chapters are the best and cover the basics such as cell cycle, check points, DNA replication, regulation of cell growth and cancer genetics (concepts and definitions). There is a very simplistic short chapter on clinical aspects of cancer, including epidemiology, staging and therapy.

The next nine chapters delve a little more deeply with whole chapters on oncogenes, tumour suppressor genes, apoptosis, telomeres, genetic instability, cell-cell interactions, control of gene expression/epigenetic instability, tumour cells and immunity, and finally angiogenesis.

The final four chapters focus on cancer diagnosis and management in a very general manner. There was very little on the laboratory techniques used in molecular biology. A short bibliography accompanies each chapter, referencing several books and journal articles relevant to the chapter, although not exhaustive.

Overall, as a clinician I found it did not flow from the bench to the bedside, however it had good explanations and covered the basic science well, particularly in the first half of the book.

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