



Alternative and Complementary Therapies for Cancer: Integrative Approaches and Discovery of Conventional Drugs

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Cancer is a common disease with a devastating impact on the physical and psychological well being of patients. The diagnosis of cancer brings upon many clinical challenges and questions for which clear and simple answers are not always provided by modern medicine. To date, only limited therapeutic options are available for patients with advanced cancer. The recent shift toward targeted therapies has improved substantially patient's survival, however, relapses are frequent and cure remains rare. This led patients and many health care managers to shift attention to the holistic approach of traditional medicine particularly preparations from herbal products to manage and alleviate the disease.

Typically, herbal preparations contain single or multiple plant ingredients, including a number of potential active components. Yet, they remain classified as food supplements and thus are exempt from regulations on quality control and proof of efficacy that govern standard pharmaceuticals. Clinical evidence for many preparations is often based on non-documented or anecdotal evidence. In consequence, several preparations with unproven efficacy are circulating in the market with the fear of interference with standard cancer therapies and/or severe toxicity that some can generate, in addition to the unjustified economical burden to patients. Despite inconsistent and conflicting clinical results single molecules have been isolated from herbal preparations and many are exploited to develop potential novel agents.

This has fostered the need to organize a set of timely, in-depth and up-to-date review covering the latest developments in alternative cancer management from a scientific and clinical perspective dedicated to the medical community and health care providers, as well as to patients and their families. This book brings the latest comprehensive cancer information and practical recommendations on the best documented practice of alternative therapies for cancer management put together by recognized experts in the fields of medical oncology, traditional medicine, and cancer pharmacology. It goes hand-in-hand with the patient's medical treatment options, quality of life issues, and more. The book is organized into four major sections: The first is an overview of the cancer syndrome by renowned medical oncologists from the USA and Europe. The second is a comprehensive description of traditional medicine by renowned experts from China and Germany. The third is an overview on the pharmacological impact of herb-based formulations on standard chemotherapy agents used in clinical practice. The fourth is a survey of cases reports from several hospitals with approved practice of alternative medicine.

The book will feature simple definitions and essential information grouped in both medical and lay-term terminology, and straightforward illustrations related to human physiology, disease definition, scientific data on known and potential mechanisms of action, and preventive approaches.

Finally, the book will feature collaboration of experts from China, India, USA, Canada, Germany, France, and other centres with recognized expertise in alternative/traditional medicine. This international cooperation is crucial to cover the complex topic of alternative therapies for cancer.

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