

Preface

Contemporary Diagnosis and Management of Head and Neck Cancer



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Guest Editors

The World Cancer Report, published in 2003 by the World Health Organization, predicts an overall 50% increase in the incidence of cancer during the next 20 years. There are currently 22 million cancer patients worldwide, and another 10 million are diagnosed each year. The report goes on to suggest that cancer rates are highest and most difficult to combat in wealthier (Westernized) nations where smoking, lack of exercise, and unhealthy dietary habits are more prevalent.

Otolaryngologists are privileged to provide comprehensive care for maladies of the head and neck. Head and neck malignancy is among the most devastating disease processes we encounter, and treatment of head and neck cancer is complex. Accepted best management can vary significantly based upon seemingly subtle differences in tumor location and biology. The general otolaryngologist, who needs to be up-to-date in the management of otologic, rhinologic, laryngologic, allergy, reconstructive, and myriad other otolaryngologic topics, may find it difficult to stay current with the ever-changing literature on head and neck malignancies.

In this issue of the *Otolaryngologic Clinics of North America*, we have tried to provide a broad overview of contemporary diagnosis and management of a number of head and neck cancers. The concept for this book came during the organization of a large multidisciplinary conference held at Boston University/Boston Medical Center in June 2004 entitled, “Diagnosis & Management of Head and Neck Cancer for the Community-Based Practitioner.” Several of the nationally renowned head and neck

oncologists who have contributed to this issue have based articles on their presentations at this meeting.

We are indebted to the many talented clinicians and researchers who have devoted so much time and effort to their contributions to this text. We also wish to acknowledge the selfless support of our families and loved ones over so many years, without whom none of our efforts would see fruition.

We trust you will find the articles within to be interesting, informative, and practical. Although this issue is by no means a comprehensive text, the editors hope that the information presented here will help in refining clinical decision-making, improve the understanding of the latest surgical and nonsurgical therapies, and provide a contemporary snapshot of available treatment for our head and neck cancer patients.

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