
Preface

Stem Cells are nature's indispensable gift to multicellular organisms, including humans.

This is volume 10 of the 14-volume series, *Stem Cells and Cancer Stem Cells: Therapeutic Applications in Disease and Tissue Injury*. A stem cell is defined as a cell that can self-renew and differentiate into one or more specialized cell types. A stem cell may be pluripotent, which is able to give rise to the endodermal, ectodermal, and mesodermal lineages; an example is embryonic stem cells. A stem cell may be multipotent, which is able to give rise to all cells in a particular lineage; examples are hematopoietic stem cells and neural stem cells. A stem cell may be unipotent, which is able to give rise to only one cell type; an example is keratinocytes.

A cancer stem cell is a cell type within a tumor that possesses the capacity of self-renewal and can give rise to the heterogeneous lineages of cancer cells that comprise the tumor. In other words, a cancer stem cell is a tumor initiating cell. A unique feature of cancer stem cell is that although conventional chemotherapy will kill most cells in a tumor, cancer stem cells remain intact, resulting in the development of resistance of therapy. All of these types of stem cells are discussed in this series.

By bringing together a large number of experts (oncologists, neurosurgeons, physicians, research scientists, and pathologists) in various aspects of this medical field, it is my hope that substantial progress will be made against terrible human disease and injury. It is difficult for a single author to discuss effectively the complexity of diagnosis, therapy, including tissue regeneration. Another advantage of involving more than one author is to present different points of view on a specific controversial aspect of cancer cure and tissue regeneration. I hope these goals will be fulfilled in this and other volumes of the series. This volume was written by 66 contributors representing 13 countries. I am grateful to them for their promptness in accepting my suggestions. Their practical experience highlights their writings, which should build and further the endeavors of the readers in these important areas of disease and injury. I respect and appreciate the hard work and exceptional insight into the nature of cancer and other diseases provided by these contributors. The contents of the volume are divided into five subheadings: Mesenchymal Stem Cells, Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells, Neural Cells and Neural Stem Cells, Role of Stem Cells in Disease, and Stem Cell Transplantation for the convenience of the readers.

It is my hope that subsequent volumes of the series will join this volume in assisting in the more complete understanding of the causes, diagnosis, and cell-based treatment of major human diseases and debilitating tissue/organ injuries. There exists a tremendous, urgent demand by the public and the scientific community to address to cancer diagnosis, treatment, cure, and hopefully prevention. In the light of existing cancer calamity, government funding must give priority to eradicating deadly malignancies over military superiority.

I am thankful to my students for their help in many ways in completing this project.

M.A. Hayat

Stem Cells and Cancer Stem Cells, Volume 10
Therapeutic Applications in Disease and Injury

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2013, XLII, 298 p. 35 illus., 28 illus. in color.,

ISBN: 978-94-007-6262-6