

Preface

The impact of cancer on the skeleton can be devastating and typically results in a major decline in quality of life as well as reduced survival. Over the last decade or more, we have learnt a great deal about the cellular interactions that lead to the colonisation of bone by tumour cells and subsequent formation of metastases. This improved knowledge has helped the development of a range of bone-targeted treatments that have profoundly affected the clinical course of metastatic bone disease across the range of primary tumours that can affect the skeleton. These agents have complemented the improvements in specific drug treatments for cancer, radiation treatments and orthopaedic surgery and become part of the standard of care for patients with spread of cancer to bone.

Drs. Vassiliou, Chow and Kardamakis are to be congratulated on the production of this excellent textbook containing contributions from some of the leading authors in the field from around the world. Following discussion of the pathophysiology, clinical features and epidemiology of bone metastases, the strategies for investigation and subsequent therapeutic management of bone metastases are discussed. These chapters cover all of the relevant treatment modalities including surgery, radiotherapy, systemic anti-cancer treatment and bone-targeted therapies. Valuable contributions on the assessment of therapeutic response and on the cost of managing metastatic bone disease complement this comprehensive, highly useful textbook that will be of value to all oncologists and other clinicians dealing with advanced cancer patients.

Through better diagnostic tools, advancing surgical techniques, improved systemic and local anti-cancer treatments and particularly the introduction of bone-targeted therapies, the management of metastatic bone disease has been transformed for the better. The cascade of frequent skeletal complications experienced by patients with metastatic bone during the latter part of the last century, often requiring inpatient care and occurring on average every 3–4 months, has been replaced by a disease that can be largely managed in an outpatient setting with relatively minor disruption from the skeletal component of the disease. In many cancers, this has resulted in the possibility of disease control over years rather than months with excellent quality of life and social functioning.

This book fills an important niche for all of us involved in cancer management to help ensure that we implement the variety of available treatments in the most effective and efficient manner and thereby help our patients live better and, ideally, longer lives despite their advanced malignancy.

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Bone Metastases

A translational and Clinical Approach

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