

Preface

The past twenty years have seen a significant worldwide reduction in mortality from breast cancer, largely due to improved early detection methods and development of more effective therapies, including adjuvant therapies. However, more than fifty percent of breast tumors do not respond to these therapies and more than seventy percent of patients relapse after five years. These failures are largely due to breast cancer stem cells (CSCs), found in all malignant breast tumors. Breast CSCs are considered to be the origins of tumors and contributors to metastasis and relapse processes in breast cancer patients.

Targeting breast CSCs is therefore a promising therapeutic strategy. Over the last ten years, many properties of breast CSCs have been discovered and used to facilitate new targeting strategies, several of which have been tested in clinical trials and have gone on to become conventional breast cancer treatments.

This book summarizes some specific characteristics of breast cancer stem cells, therapy resistance, and some novel therapies targeting to breast cancer stem cells.

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