



## Natural Compounds in Cancer Therapy. John Boik, Oregon Medical Press, Princeton, MN, 2001, \$32.00 (ISBN 0-9648280-1-4)

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## BOOK REVIEW

### ***Natural Compounds in Cancer Therapy.* John Boik, Oregon Medical Press, Princeton, MN, 2001, \$32.00 (ISBN 0-9648280-1-4)**

Shortly after scanning the 521 pages of this paperback book, I realized I had received a jewel. The text is clear and crisp, the illustrations and tables are concise and useful, the concepts are rudimentary but not trivial, and the scope is incredible. The book primarily focuses on 38 natural compounds of potential value in cancer therapy. The selection of these compounds is well-justified. Of equal or even greater value is the manner in which these compounds are integrated with cancer biology.

The author begins with a superb discussion of seven strategies for cancer prevention (genetic instability, abnormal gene expression, abnormal signal transduction, abnormal cell-to-cell communication, angiogenesis, invasion and metastasis, immune evasion), and beautifully illustrates these concepts and drug interactions in the following chapters (Parts I and II). Part III describes, in a highly balanced and intellectual manner, clinical considerations with a range of natural products, including trace metals, vitamin C and antioxidants, polysaccharides, lipids, amino acids and related compounds, flavonoids, nonflavonoid phenolic compounds, terpenes, and lipid-soluble vitamins. Along the way, in addition to describing clinical trials, mechanistic considerations are incorporated, as well as synergism, dose-response relationships, metabolism, etc. This is not simply a regurgitation of the literature, but a thoughtful and well-balanced interpretation and analysis of the data. Further, this section is

well-integrated with the other parts of the book. Also, traditional cancer chemotherapeutic agents are appropriately described throughout the text, but the final chapter of Part III concentrates on the relationship of natural compounds with chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

These sections are followed by 13 appendices (chemical data and structures, useful supplemental details related to the various chapters, predictive models, dose calculations, etc.), a list of acronyms, and a comprehensive index. Beyond the exquisite content of the book, it is well edited and carefully designed. The manuscript itself is of high quality.

There is one final amazing feature. At the time of this review, the price of the book was \$32.00. It can be purchased from Oregon Medical Press, Princeton, Minnesota ([sales@ompress.com](mailto:sales@ompress.com)).

It is common to suggest the audience for whom such a volume would be of interest. In essence, based on the incredibly unique manner in which this book is crafted, it should be of value to anyone interested in cancer. This includes anyone working in any area of cancer research, physicians, and the lay public. There is something important to be gained by all, and the unusually fair purchase price should permit broad dissemination.

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