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052180373X - Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer: Genetics, Screening and Management

Edited by Patrick J. Morrison, Shirley V. Hodgson and Neva E. Haites

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Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer

Genetics, Screening and Management

This book surveys the profound and far-reaching ramifications that have arisen from the very significant advances in our understanding of the genetic basis of familial breast and ovarian cancer. Written by international experts from Europe and North America, it provides the busy clinician with a contemporary and wide-ranging guide to the latest developments in the diagnosis, genetics, screening, prevention and management of familial breast cancer. In this rapidly advancing field, this book provides an unrivalled source of information, including sections on ethical and insurance issues and the different cultural aspects of breast cancer. The use of recently devised cancer genetics clinics and different referral criteria and patterns to these clinics are also detailed. This accessible book will be of immense value to all clinical geneticists, oncologists and healthcare professionals involved in screening and counselling programmes.

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Genetics, Screening and Management

Edited by

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**To all of the families with hereditary cancer who have worked with us
to begin to understand the problem, and for their patience while we
search for the answers.**

Contents

	<i>List of contributors</i>	ix
	<i>Foreword</i> by Helena Kennedy	xiii
	<i>Preface</i>	xv
Part 1	Molecular biology and natural history	1
1	Introduction Patrick J. Morrison, Shirley V. Hodgson and Neva E. Haites	3
2	Overview of the clinical genetics of breast cancer Neva Haites and Helen Gregory	6
3	Cowden syndrome and related disorders Charis Eng	22
4	Overview of the clinical genetics of ovarian cancer Pierre O. Chappuis and William D. Foulkes	43
5	Ovarian and breast cancer as part of hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (HNPCC) and other hereditary colorectal cancer syndromes H. F. A. Vasen and M. A. Nooy	73
6	The natural history of hereditary breast cancer Pierre O. Chappuis, Dominique Stoppa-Lyonnet, Bernard Asselain and William D. Foulkes	81
7	Pathology of the breast and ovary in mutation carriers Sunil R. Lakhani and Adrienne M. Flanagan	108
8	Risk estimation for familial breast and ovarian cancer Jenny Chang-Claude and Heiko Becher	125
Part 2	Screening	141
9	Developing a cancer genetics service: a Welsh model Jonathon Gray	143

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii	List of contents	
10	Referral criteria for cancer genetics clinics Diana M. Eccles	157
11	Guidelines for the development of cancer genetics services Neva E. Haites, Shirley V. Hodgson and the Scottish Office Working Group on Cancer Genetics	166
12	Cultural and educational aspects influencing the development of cancer genetics services in different European countries Shirley V. Hodgson	194
13	Screening, detection and survival patterns of breast and other cancers in high-risk families Pål Møller and C. Michael Steel	204
14	Screening for familial ovarian cancer Barnaby Rufford, Usha Menon and Ian Jacobs	220
Part 3	Management	235
15	Management of <i>BRCA1/2</i> mutation carriers Pierre O. Chappuis and William D. Foulkes	237
16	Management of familial ovarian cancer Dirk Brinkmann and Ian Jacobs	275
17	Prophylactic mastectomy in mutation carriers D. G. R. Evans, F. I. Lalloo and A. D. Baildam	286
18	Psychosocial aspects of genetic counselling for breast and ovarian cancer Alison Bish and Steven Sutton	295
19	<i>BRCA1/2</i> testing: uptake and its measurement Lucy Brooks, Andrew Shenton, F. I. Lalloo and D. G. R. Evans	306
20	Breast cancer genetics: ethical, social and insurance issues Patrick J. Morrison and C. Michael Steel	339
21	Gene therapy for breast and ovarian cancer Richard Kennedy and Patrick G. Johnston	372
22	Future directions Patrick J. Morrison, Shirley V. Hodgson and Neva E. Haites	384
	<i>Index</i>	393

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Foreword

I am very pleased to have been asked to write the Foreword to this important and timely book. As Chair of the Human Genetics Commission I am only too aware of the impact of familial breast cancer, or indeed many other familial cancers, on our work.

The issues raised by an increased understanding of the genetics of breast cancer have formed part of our thinking on how to deal with issues of privacy and confidentiality, such as the provision of genetic information to family members. Moving beyond the clinical, we have also considered some of the issues concerning patenting of gene sequences, taking as one example the continuing debate about the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene patents. In addition, we have considered familial breast cancer as one of several conditions on the radar of insurance companies before underwriting life or health insurance.

I am therefore pleased to see that a fellow member of the Human Genetics Commission, Professor Patrick Morrison, and his colleagues have so carefully and clearly set out many of these important issues in this book. I hope that it will be widely read by clinicians and those responsible for policy in all of these areas and that they will take note of the important messages herein.

May 2002

Baroness Helena Kennedy QC

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Preface

Cancer genetics is a new field where medical knowledge is developing rapidly, and there is a continuing need to assess the implications of new research into the genetic aspects of breast and ovarian cancer for clinical management.

Clearly, many individuals have a family history of cancer, but only a small proportion have inherited genes conferring a high risk of developing specific cancers. The development of services to identify individuals at high risk for genetic assessment/testing and management, and to offer those at moderately increased risk appropriate surveillance and follow-up for cancer, is a major organizational challenge which must be shared between clinicians at all levels – from primary care to the specialist geneticist.

Because this field is developing so rapidly, there are scanty up-to-date, concise and accessible sources of information to which interested professionals (whether clinical geneticists, surgeons, oncologists, psychologists or other professionals) can turn. This book has been written to address this.

It is divided into three parts. Part 1 deals with summaries of the molecular biology and natural history of hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Part 2 examines current screening recommendations, how services have been set up, the characteristics of patients referred, and how services differ in different cultures. Part 3 deals with management of breast and ovarian cancer in mutation carriers and those at high risk, and also includes chapters on ethical, social and insurance issues, psychosocial aspects, and preventative surgery.

We hope this volume will be regularly updated and will be of value to all those involved in cancer genetic screening, counselling and management programmes.

2002

Patrick J. Morrison

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