Book review

Diagnosis of Breast Diseases. V Barth, 2011 (Thieme Medical Publishers, Stuttgart - New York)
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This work represents a synthesis of a very impressive atlas and an excellent contemporary textbook. It explains how important it is to know all the diagnostic possibilities in the breast, not only mammography. The editor and main author Professor Volker Barth is quite right when he says that "the early detection of breast cancer can be effective only when the three pillars – clinical investigation, mammography and ultrasound – are united within a structured, quality-assured program". Professor Barth is an internationally recognised expert, educator and researcher. His co-authors are competent specialists in this field.

Following an extensive introduction, section 2 discusses tumour biology including causes, growth factors, endocrine influences, hormone replacement, therapy in menopause and predisposing genetic factors. Section 3 focuses on prognostic factors: growth rate, tumour size, lymph node involvement and prognosis. Section 4 provides information on macroanatomy, histology, radiography and ultrasound. In the fifth section under the title *Early Detection and Appropriate Treatment* are the topics' diagnostic options, possibilities and limitations of complementary investigation and therapy. In this section the reader will find chapters on physical examination, mammography (technical aspects, BIRADS classification and grading of breast cancer, digital mammography, future trends, double reading, case presentation and screening), ultrasound (technique, schematic protocol, basic structures of the breast and their variants on

ultrasound with mammographic correlation), MRI and positron emission tomography. There are special chapters dealing with neoplasms in younger women, changes during pregnancy and lactation, the male breast as well as text reviewing therapy and perioperative management, sentinel lymph node biopsy, treatment related reactions, complications and errors, post-operative changes and follow-up.

The book is based on an excellent knowledge of the problems and the author's own experience. The level of scientific content is high. All the latest developments are presented and discussed. Other important features are the precise clinicopathological correlations, the principles of best practice and the cultivation of clinical understanding of the patient. Particularly useful is the presentation of cases demonstrating difficulties and pitfalls in breast diagnosis as well as the possibility of self-testing.

The structure of the book is coherent and balanced. The text is concise and clearly written throughout. There are more than 1500 illustrations, many of them in colour, including clinical, histological, cytological and other photographs; ultrasound images and mammograms, which are overall of high quality. Well selected literary references are given at the end of the work. An extensive index helps the reader to find information quickly. The layout style is elegant and the printing quality is superb.

In conclusion, I believe that this outstanding modern book will be highly valued by radiologists, oncologists, surgeons and many other specialists. Professor Volker Barth and his team can be proud of their achievements.

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