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Book Review

Radiobiology for the Radiologist: 6th edition

Eric J. Hall, Amato J. Giaccia

Lippincott Williams and Wilkins Publishing; ISBN 0-7817-4151-3; 656 pages; 2006; Hardback; £53

This is an American text and the title does not represent its potential market in the UK. This is an excellent introduction to the basics of radiobiology and would be a suitable text for all radiographers both diagnostic and therapeutic, it would also be of value to medical physicists/medical technicians working in this field. It is described as being a "self-contained course in the subject of radiobiology"; as such, it would be suitable for students in all of the above disciplines.

This book would also be of interest to anyone interested in the history of radiation sciences, opening with a section on key milestones in this area, further historical developments are explored in the early chapters.

This book aims to provide a basic overview of the field of radiobiology, rather than looking at specific topics in more detail. The text does that successfully and is an excellent, easy to follow step-by-step introductory guide to radiobiology. For those who want to undertake further reading/research within a specific topic, this text is a useful starting point, with updated reference lists of key articles at the end of each chapter.

This text is divided into two sections, the first section is relevant to all those concerned with diagnostic and therapeutic radiography. Part 2 contains more in depth material relevant to radiotherapy and includes additional material on molecular biology.

The topic of radiobiology is constantly evolving. This 6th edition helps to bring the reader up to date with the basic principles of radiobiology. Utilising their extensive experience in this field, the author's are able to indicate where the subject is growing and possible future directions, with the aid of links to useful references. Current topics of interest including, molecular techniques, Cancer biology, DNA repair and the oxygenation effect have all been extensively updated and expanded in this edition. However, what this edition continues to do well is explain the basic principles of radiobiology simply and in a logical format.

Overall this book is easy to read, is concisely written and is supported by some excellent tables and figures from a range of sources. Each chapter opens with a list of subheadings to help the reader navigate the text. The end of each chapter has a section entitled "Pertinent Conclusions", which summarises all the key points, and could be a useful study aid/revision tool. An excellent read for all those with an interest in radiobiology.

Adrian Fleet, Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Health and Well Being,
Sheffield Hallam University,
Sheffield, UK