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Cancer Treatment and Research

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Management of Infectious Complication in Cancer Patients

edited by

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Preface

Infection is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in patients with neoplastic disease because of compromised host defenses. These defects result in an increased risk of infection and its complications. The nature of the underlying malignancy, the immunodeficiencies associated with it, and the treatments directed against it are all important determinants of infection. In recent years the introduction of more intensive chemotherapeutic regimens and the widespread use of bone marrow and peripheral stem cell transplantation have changed the pattern of infection in many patients. Furthermore, the increasing use of central venous access devices and antimicrobial prophylaxis has changed the epidemiology of infection in these patients as well.

To complicate matters, the microbiology of infections is continuously evolving. Whereas in the past the majority of serious infections were caused by gram-negative bacilli, this has changed to favor more gram-positive pathogens and fungi. This has resulted in the emergence of vancomycin-resistant enterococci, glycopeptide-insensitive *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Candida krusei*.

The objective of this volume in the *Cancer Treatment and Research* series is to emphasize that whereas the management of infection in cancer patients is common, it is constantly changing. With the increasing complexity of these patients, optimal management requires a multidisciplinary approach. Ultimately, it is hoped that this book will assist clinicians in the diagnosis, management, and prevention of infection in order to optimize care for patients with cancer.