

American Joint Committee on Cancer Releases 7th Edition of Cancer Staging Manual

Chicago 2009/10/14 -The American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) has released the seventh edition of the AJCC Cancer Staging Manual. The manual is intended to provide physicians and health care professionals around the world with a tool to facilitate the uniform description and reporting of cancer. It was last updated in 2002.

The AJCC was established in 1959 to formulate and publish systems of classification of cancer, which are used by the medical community in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Proper cancer staging is essential for cancer care specialists to determine appropriate treatment; to evaluate results of management and clinical trials; and to serve as the standard for local, regional, and international reporting on cancer incidence and outcomes. The AJCC cancer staging system is the preeminent paradigm used by physicians throughout the world to diagnose cancer and determine the extent of disease. The American Cancer Society (ACS) is a founding member of the AJCC, and is the primary funder of the organization.

Considered the gold standard in cancer staging, the AJCC Cancer Staging Manual brings together the appropriate and evidence-based criteria for the staging of cancer for 52 anatomic primary sites, which includes the rational and rules for staging; the background explanation of the changes between the sixth and seventh editions; the definitions of tumor, lymph node involvement, and metastasis, stage groupings, and histologic grade. "The AJCC believes this newly released Edition of the AJCC Cancer Staging Manual will enhance the utility of the TNM* staging to patients and clinicians," said Stephen Edge, MD, FACS, the publication's editor. "This seventh edition is also a springboard to the exciting future of personalized cancer care using data to more specifically define prognosis and the potential for benefit from specific therapies," Dr. Edge said.

"We are pleased to have played a key partnership role in developing these important AJCC references," said Otis W. Brawley, MD, American Cancer Society chief medical officer. "The seventh edition Manual has been developed with a variety of key enhancements, including an improved approach to data collection, which will ultimately lead to optimal care of the cancer patient."

In addition to the manual, two spin-off products are also available for purchase: the AJCC Cancer Staging Handbook, which features all the staging information offered in the manual in a pocket-size book, and the AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas, which offers a highly visual representation with hundreds of additional illustrations.

Published by Springer, the manual, handbook, and atlas are all prepared by the AJCC in collaboration with its member organizations, including the American Cancer Society, which provided primary funding for the development. These organizations work with the AJCC in the promotion of staging at the time of diagnosis in order to achieve better patient outcomes. The manual, handbook, and atlas are available from the publisher at <http://www.cancerstaging.net>.

*The TNM Staging System is based on the extent of the tumor (T), the extent of spread to the lymph nodes (N), and the presence of metastasis (M). # # #

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