CANCER OF THE STOMACH

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CLINICAL CANCER MONOGRAPHS
Volume 3

Cancer of the Stomach

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Foreword

Gastric cancer is regarded by most clinicians as being a highly lethal malignancy. Five year survival figures in the UK, USA and Northern Europe rarely exceed 8% and yet there are some isolated centres that consistently report more favourable figures in each category of staged patients. Such observations may be due to case selection or conceivably due to improved treatment.

In order to avoid selection bias it is particularly valuable to report outcome from a stable, finite population base. The West Midlands Region's Cancer Registry is well equipped to provide exactly these data. The boundaries of the Region have remained stable and high quality data have been recorded since 1957. It is, indeed, timely that the observations from the Registry between 1957 and 1981 are now available. The report highlights the variations in operative mortality at a time when audit and CEPD (Confidential Enquiry into Perioperative death) reports are being considered by our politicians, and when the whole question of specialisation is the subject of professional debate.

Subtle changes in the incidence of disease in relation to environmental factors has helped to shed some light on possible aetiological factors.

It is appropriate that this report should analyse in detail the results of surgical therapy within each stage of the disease. Surgery still remains the only reliable method of attempted cure. Improved staging methods are urgently needed, however, in selecting those patients in whom radical ablative gastrectomy and lymphadenectomy are justified. The authors are to be congratulated in producing a thoroughly informative work which helps to formulate rational treatment policies.

Sadly, unless clinicians strive to achieve earlier diagnosis of disease, much of our surgical efforts will be relatively fruitless. This monograph indirectly makes the case for screening dyspeptic patients and establishing specialist centres for training within which treatment modalities can be comprehensively compared.

M R B Keighley MS FRCS
Barling Professor of Surgery

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Regional Cancer Registry

The original data on which this series is based is entirely from the Birmingham and West Midlands Regional Cancer Registry.

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All the staff both past and present.

From hospitals:

Consultant clinicians and pathologists
Administrators
Junior medical staff
Laboratory technicians
Medical records staff
Medical secretaries

Throughout the Region:

Coroners
General Practitioners
Staff of Family Practitioner Committees

Nationally:

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