Preface

Biliary Tract and Primary Liver Tumors

This issue of the Surgical Oncology Clinics of North America brings together experts in the field of biliary tract and primary liver tumors. Biliary and primary liver tumors require the surgeon to have excellent clinical judgment, superb operative skills, and a deep understanding of the available therapeutic options. To this end, the authors of this issue have contributed a series of articles that defines the wide array of topics that range from epidemiology and risk factors, to imaging and workup, to the treatment of patients with biliary and primary liver tumors. The authors were asked to critically review and place into a contemporary, practical clinical context the “state-of-the-art” data on the management of these challenging diseases. Over the past decade, the body of knowledge around biliary and primary liver tumors has expanded greatly. For the practicing surgeon, it can be challenging to remain well-informed about a field that has become highly specialized and nuanced. In this issue, the participating authors have done an exemplary job synthesizing the available data, providing their own unique clinical insights, and presenting the salient, most relevant information on biliary and primary tumors for the practicing hepatobiliary surgeon.

The issue provides an overview of important topics such as the epidemiology and risk factors associated with biliary and primary liver tumors. In addition, an article is devoted to recent advances in imaging with an emphasis on cross-sectional imaging and MRI in particular. A separate article examines percutaneous and endoscopic approaches to patients with biliary and primary liver tumors, while another discusses staging. Other articles focus on important nonsurgical options such as intra-arterial therapy and radiation therapy. Most articles, however, are disease-specific and provide an opportunity for each author to review thoroughly the management and therapeutic options for intrahepatic, hilar, and distal cholangiocarcinoma, as well as hepatocellular carcinoma. In this way, the reader can obtain an in-depth perspective
of the management of each of these diseases, which have unique tumor biologies, natural histories, as well as clinical management options.

I believe that readers of this issue of Surgical Oncology Clinics of North America will gain a contemporary understanding of the current data on the diagnosis, management, and prognosis of patients with biliary and primary liver tumors. It is also my hope and belief that readers of this issue will find the information as a practical means to help improve the care of patients with these challenging diseases.

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