

News from the American Joint Committee on Cancer

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For Immediate Release

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Cancer Staging Manual, Eighth Edition, Just Released by American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC)

Newest edition's precision medicine-based approach focuses on more individualized treatment for cancer patients

CHICAGO (October 6, 2016): The AJCC *TNM Cancer Staging Manual*, Eighth Edition draws on newer understanding of cancer biology concepts and emphasizes a more contemporary individualized approach to cancer classification and treatment, building on its four decade-long traditional population-based approach.

“We have been very mindful of molecular advancements and their impact on cancer classification, prognostication and treatment,” said Mahul B. Amin, MD, FCAP, about his team of authors. Dr. Amin is the Editor-in-Chief of the Eighth Edition Staging Manual professor and chairman emeritus, department of pathology and laboratory medicine, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, and incoming chairman and endowed professor of the department of pathology and laboratory medicine at University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, Memphis, TN. He said his team members “have been proactive to incorporate new relevant genomic markers, for example, in breast cancer and oropharyngeal cancer, to build and empower the traditional concepts of staging of cancer.” Dr. Amin added the transition to include new molecular markers is a significant development in this manual, and he believes it “will only grow exponentially in future staging efforts to allow staging to be very contemporary, relevant and applicable in clinical care of individual patients,” he said.

Cancer staging provides those with cancer and their physicians the critical standards for determining the best treatment approach for their disease, for defining prognosis and the likelihood of overcoming the cancer once diagnosed. Since the Seventh Edition of the manual was published in 2009, researchers and medical practitioners have learned that genomic alterations drive cancer and may vary considerably between tumors that, in the past, were thought to be in the same category, Dr. Amin said.

The Eighth Edition is effective for all cancer cases diagnosed on or after January 1, 2017; there is a mandatory requirement that American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer- accredited hospitals use the AJCC TNM system as the major language for cancer reporting. This markedly updated and revised Eighth Edition presents evidence-based revisions for the staging of cancer for a number of organ sites, which includes the rationale and rules for staging; the definitions of tumor, lymph node involvement, and metastasis; stage groupings; and histologic grade.

Another exciting development to improve ease of access and use while assuring consistency and accuracy of content critical for patient care is the investment by the AJCC in importing the Eighth Edition content into a Component Content Management System (CCMS) that can be distributed electronically through an Application Programming Interface (API). Electronic health records software vendors, cancer registry software vendors, and electronic application developers will benefit from this digitally structured content by being able to incorporate the content directly into their products when they license access to the API. “This complex transformation from a print manual to a CCMS and API was the culmination of a coordinated effort of the AJCC leadership and staff under the direction of the Executive Director of the American College of Surgeons,” according to David P. Winchester, MD, FACS, Executive Director of the AJCC.

Dr. Amin explained that 430 experts from 184 institutions in 22 countries on six continents worked together to produce this powerful resource for patients and physicians alike. “It has been an honor and a privilege to lead the best cancer professionals from around the world to help set the new standards of cancer classification and care for the next several years in our collective fight against cancer,” he said. This collective effort will have a profound positive impact on cancer care and the updates will undoubtedly benefit cancer patients, their care providers and the scientific and surveillance communities. The manual was developed by the AJCC in cooperation with the TNM Committee of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC). The manual is available for purchase here: <http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783319406176>. Information on licensing 8E content for electronic products through the API is available through www.cancerstaging.org.

About the American Joint Committee on Cancer

The AJCC was established in 1959 to formulate and publish systems of classification of cancer, including staging and end-results reporting, that will be acceptable to and used by the medical profession for selecting the most effective treatment, determining prognosis, and continuing evaluation of cancer control measures. The AJCC is composed of 18 member organizations, and its activities are administered by the Chicago-based American College of Surgeons.