M. Kaminishi, K. Takubo, K. Mafune (Eds.)
The Diversity of Gastric Carcinoma
Pathogenesis, Diagnosis, and Therapy
It is an honor to be asked to comment on the occasion of the publication of *The Diversity of Gastric Carcinoma: Pathogenesis, Diagnosis, and Therapy*, edited by Prof. Michio Kaminishi, Dr. Takubo, and Dr. Mafune. This book provides a very valuable, wide coverage of molecular carcinogenesis and prevention, through to diagnosis and treatment of stomach neoplasia. A particularly important aspect for gastric cancer control is the biological diversity of the tumors themselves. The stomach is a complicated organ, and the cardiac and pyloric portions have different cellular compositions and functions. The many types of cells are in a constant flux of differentiation from stem cells. Precancerous conditions such as intestinal metaplasia and atrophic gastritis are well known, and there are various factors that have already been established as promoting cancer development. They include sodium chloride intake, infection of *Helicobacter pylori*, and the host genetic background. It is therefore not surprising that stomach cancers demonstrate great diversity in their biological and clinical behavior. The practical consequence is that the clinical handling that is most suitable for each individual patient is also diverse. Each chapter of this volume is well presented by authors who are specialized in fundamental and clinical sciences and who are currently active at the forefront of their own fields. The entire book is compiled taking into account the most up-to-date knowledge, with a balanced viewpoint. This book should be widely recommended to researchers and clinicians dealing with one of most ugly and common diseases of mankind, gastric cancer.

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Chairman of Section II, The Japan Academy
Preface

Gastric cancer is still the second leading cause of cancer death worldwide, although the incidence of this disease has been gradually decreasing. Vigorous research on the mechanisms of gastric cancer development, invasion, and metastasis is required to establish prevention, early detection, and precise therapies for gastric cancer.

The diversity of gastric cancer is well known. In terms of histological classification, gastric carcinoma is divided into five types according to the general rules for gastric carcinoma of the Japanese Gastric Cancer Association. Compared with other gastroenterological carcinomas, it is characteristic in gastric cancer that respective histological types develop at a constant rate. Therefore, on the basis of clinicopathological features, gastric carcinoma is divided into two major types: diffuse and intestinal in Lauren’s classification; differentiated and undifferentiated in Nakamura’s classification; and gastric and intestinal phenotype by mucin immunohistochemistry. In addition, genetic and epigenetic alterations in gastric carcinogenesis have been postulated. Sex and age differences in the incidence and clinicopathological features also have been given attention. Analysis of the underlying mechanisms of the diversity of gastric carcinogenesis is likely to provide the development of not only early detection and tailor-made therapies but also prevention of gastric cancer.

In this book, the following major topics are addressed: the history of clinical and experimental gastric cancer research; undated issues of molecular and pathological research on gastric carcinogenesis; multidisciplinary methods in diagnosis, treatment and chemotherapy; and perspectives in minimally invasive surgery. We hope this book will provide a comprehensive knowledge of gastric cancer and will encourage further development of gastric cancer research and its clinical application.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to those who have contributed their work to this book.

April 2005, Tokyo

M. Kaminishi
K. Takubo
K. Mafune
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