

BOOK REVIEWS

INTERSTITIAL BRACHYTHERAPY. PHYSICAL BIOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL CONSIDERATIONS
INTERSTITIAL COLLABORATIVE WORKING GROUP

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This book is another useful addition to the spate of literature appearing on this subject in recent years and is maybe a sign of the oft quoted renaissance in brachytherapy.

It was originated because it was felt that despite its evident advantages and increasing use, interstitial brachytherapy is a form of cancer therapy that has still not been fully exploited by radiation oncologists and the potential remains for much wider use.

The US National Cancer Institute supported a multi-institutional study to not only detail and recommend preferred procedures in interstitial brachytherapy but also to address existing problem areas and suggest topics for further study.

This document is the result of a 3 year effort on the part of medical physicists and radiation oncologists at the three medical centres selected to participate in the study.

Overall the book is well illustrated and is written in a comprehensive but concise style with useful supporting references.

The opening section details available sources for interstitial implants and is followed by discussions on implant planning and radiobiological rationale. The main section of the book concentrates on a site by site exposition of clinical procedures which necessarily represents a North American view but which will doubtless be of value to practitioners in all parts of the world. It is perhaps surprising that more detail is not included of high dose rate afterloading techniques since these have been increasingly applied in USA in the last few years.

Sections are also included on two aspects of this therapy which are now receiving increasing attention, Quality Assurance and Radiation Protection.

The book ends with a thought provoking section on Future Directions in Brachytherapy in which some topics and studies that can further the potential of this modality are outlined.

This book is not designed to be a comprehensive training manual but will no doubt be of great interest to those engaged in or recently introduced to interstitial brachytherapy.

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