

# MEDIA REVIEWS

**Nancy Phelan Walsh, RN, MSN**  
Associate Editor

## BOOKS

**Evidence-Based Cancer Care and Prevention: Behavioral Interventions.** Charles W. Given, Barbara Given\*, Victoria L. Champion\*, Sharon Kozachik\*, Danielle Nicole DeVoss (Eds.). New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2003, 448 pages, \$62.95.

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*Evidence-Based Cancer Care and Prevention: Behavioral Interventions* is an excellent book that underscores the role of behavior across the entire cancer continuum from prevention to the end of life. Given the increasing recognition of behavioral oncology, oncology providers, researchers, and other healthcare stakeholders interested in using authoritative evidence to improve patient outcomes may benefit from reading this timely book. The authors provide a well-synthesized overview of the state of the science for a number of behavioral interventions in cancer care and highlight implications for strengthening future work in this area. The book consists of 13 chapters that describe the current information on a number of behavioral interventions with a focus on diet and physical activity, cancer screening, smoking cessation, decision making, psychological adjustment, self-care, fatigue management, pain management, the use of complementary and alternative therapies, family caregiving, and interventions at the end of life.

A major strength of the book is a well-synthesized review of the literature that explores the existing evidence as well as the gaps in behavioral interventions in cancer care. Also, research studies and theoretical

models are well depicted in tabular format, facilitating easy readability throughout the text. Another strong feature of this book is the discussion about the characteristics of a quality behavioral intervention. The authors used four key features throughout the text to evaluate the quality of a number of behavioral interventions in cancer care. Researchers and providers may wish to consider these four critical features (theoretical framework, research questions, bias, and precision) when conducting or evaluating behavioral interventions. The authors stress that careful consideration of these elements may help to facilitate consistency across studies, strengthen study conclusions, and advance the body of knowledge related to behavioral interventions in cancer care. Another positive feature is the collaborative nature of the book; the authors of *Evidence-Based Cancer Care* are members of the Behavioral Cooperative Oncology Group of the Mary Margaret Walther Program for Cancer Care in Indianapolis, IN, and are noted for their commitment to behavioral oncology and quality cancer care.

Finally, the authors conclude with a discussion on the future of behavioral interventions in cancer care and highlight issues that are relevant for strengthening future work in this area. For example, a discussion on recruitment issues will become increasingly important as we experience a shift in demographics and work with more diverse populations. The authors note that previous behavioral research in cancer care has focused on very homogenous populations and should be expanded to include other populations (e.g., age, gender). The authors are very accurate in their discussions, addressing additional issues such as precision, sampling, theoretical frameworks, and outcome measurements as critical pieces to improving future behavioral interventions.

As health care continues to evolve and cancer remains a leading cause of death in the

world, evidence-based interventions are needed to transform cancer care. The authors clearly achieved the goal of describing the state of the science of behavioral interventions in this easy-to-read, one-of-a-kind, comprehensive book. Although the challenge of integrating behavioral research into cancer care still remains, the contents of this text provide the foundation for conducting future research and ultimately improving cancer outcomes across the cancer trajectory.

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**Cancer and the Environment: Gene-Environment Interaction.** Samuel Wilson, Lovell Jones, Christine Coussens, Kathi Hanna (Eds.). Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2002, 140 pages, \$27. Free online at [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu).

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The Institute of Medicine (IOM), established in 1970 by the National Academy of Sciences, serves as advisor to the nation to improve health. IOM advises the government on issues such as vaccine safety, healthcare delivery and quality, nutrition standards, cancer prevention and management, and military and veterans' health. As an independent, scientific advisor, IOM strives to provide advice that is unbiased, based on evidence, and grounded in science. Organized into nine oversight boards, IOM has numerous projects in 16 categorical topics. *Cancer and the Environment: Gene-Environment Interaction* is the summary of a workshop convened in May 2001 by the roundtable on environmental health sciences, research, and medicine.

Roundtables and workshops provide a forum where individuals from industry, government, and academia can convene to examine new scientific findings and issues and their ramifications for health policy. Such activities provide a neutral ground for debate from a variety of perspectives and analysis that is meant to inform, shed light on, and advance mutual understanding of emerging issues.

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\* Oncology Nursing Society member

Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Book Size
🕒 Quick, on-the-spot resource	✓ Basic	📖 Pocket size
🕒🕒 Moderate time requirement	✓✓ Intermediate	📖📖 Intermediate
🕒🕒🕒 In-depth study	✓✓✓ Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required	📖📖📖 Desk reference

The forward by Dr. Kenneth Shine, IOM president at the time of publication, stresses the fact that previous roundtable meetings emphasized the multiple interrelationships that exist among the social, natural, and built environments as they relate to human health. He emphasizes that all healthcare professionals must have a stake in understanding who we are genetically, the environment in which we live, and the relationship of these factors to disease.

The book also includes a preface by Paul G. Rogers, JD, former chair of the Subcommittee on Health and Environment in the House in the early 1970s during the passage of the National Cancer Act and chair of the roundtable. The roundtable was charged with asking complex questions about gene-environment interactions, which may well be one of the greatest challenges facing science in the new century.

The book is composed of eight chapters and begins with a chapter summarizing the workshop. The charge to participants and workshop objectives are reviewed, followed by the keynote addresses of television news anchor Sam Donaldson and scientist Joseph Fraumeni, Jr. The remaining chapters review links among environmental factors, genetics, and the development of cancer; gene-environment interaction in special populations; and gene-environment interaction in site-specific cancer. Each of these aforementioned chapters provides a concise background of the topical areas presented, a synthesis of the perspectives presented, and the key issues that need to be addressed. Each chapter concludes with a summary and highlights quotations from the presenters. Chapters 6 and 7, both less than two pages in length, speak to cancer treatment, the environment and immune system, and the relationship of environmental issues to health policy.

The final chapter looks to the future and summarizes recommendations for addressing disparities in cancer incidence and mortality, cancer prevention, future areas for research, cancer registries and large populational studies, and policy implications. Short abstracts of all presentations follow the final chapter. Appendices include a glossary, workshop agenda, speakers and panelists, and workshop participants.

The book is well written and provides an easily comprehensible overview of the growing understanding of how genetic make-up, lifestyle, and environmental exposures may result in the development of cancer. To continue to make progress in the prevention and treatment of cancer, scientists and healthcare professionals need to place additional focus on the interplay among genetic change, modifier genes, and the environment. The completion of the draft sequence of the human genome, understanding cancer at the molecular level, and the evolving expanded view of environmental health as one inclusive of diet, lifestyle metabolic alterations, socioeco-

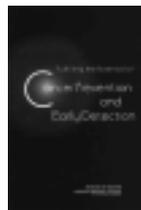
omic status, and environmental pollutants will allow for more meaningful and precise studies of environmental contributions to cancer.

The text is available free via the Internet and is engaging for those interested in this important new area of cancer management. As with all reports and publications from the National Academy, *Cancer and the Environment* serves as provocative reading and causes readers to ponder the larger issues of health and public policy.

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**Fulfilling the Potential of Cancer Prevention and Early Detection.** Susan J. Curry, Tim Byers, Maria Hewitt (Eds.). Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2003, 542 pages, \$59.95.

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The National Cancer Policy Board has compiled a comprehensive report on the data related to cancer prevention and early detection. *Fulfilling the Potential of Cancer Prevention and Early Detection* details strategies for primary and secondary prevention of cancer.

Two chapters are devoted to describing lifestyle behaviors that contribute to cancer and methods to modify those risky behaviors. The report offers oncology nurses detailed information about behaviors that have a “convincing, probable or possible” relationship with cancer; therefore, nurses can focus on the behaviors that should be targeted. The book then reviews the effectiveness of many strategies to modify risky behaviors. This information is invaluable to nurses working in offices, schools, or communities.

Three chapters focus on cancer screening. Each major screening tool is discussed in detail. The benefits and risks of screening are examined in an unbiased manner, and abundant research findings support the positions stated. Any nurse working with health screening would find these chapters filled with thought-provoking data.

An additional topic discussed in *Fulfilling the Potential of Cancer Prevention and Early Detection* is the current state of professional education and training related to cancer prevention and early detection. This is an excellent overview that includes grants and financial awards offered by major research associations. Another chapter focuses on research that has been completed and offers suggestions for future projects.

A chapter on federal programs that support cancer prevention and early detection is excellent for those seeking a better understanding of the role that the federal government plays in cancer prevention. Each federal agency is described in detail, including its goals, scope, and financial resources.

The final chapter is a helpful summary of the Policy Board’s findings and recommendations. Each of the 12 recommendations is followed by a list of research priorities relating to the recommendation. Readers looking for a particular research project on cancer prevention would find this chapter extremely beneficial.

*Fulfilling the Potential of Cancer Prevention and Early Detection* is well referenced; in fact, 87 pages are devoted to listing those references. Each chapter concludes with a helpful summary, and many tables and graphs illustrate the material. Multiple research studies are discussed as they relate to the subject matter. Although an understanding of statistics would be helpful while studying this report, the material is presented in a manner that should be readable for any nurse. *Fulfilling the Potential of Cancer Prevention and Early Detection* is an in-depth report that would be a valuable asset to oncology nurses interested in prevention and early detection. To browse the book online, visit [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu) and enter the book’s title in the “Find” section.

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## Other Books

**Where Have All the Nurses Gone? The Impact of the Nursing Shortage on American Healthcare.** Faye Satterly\*. New York: Prometheus Books, 2004, 225 pages, softcover, \$21.

This text offers a behind-the-scenes account of what is ailing in our current healthcare system. The author, a nursing veteran, illustrates how the problems inherent to our profession in combination with hospital economics and an aging population have negatively impacted the welfare of medical care. Included is a call to action to counter the nursing shortage.

**Postcards of Nursing: A Worldwide Tribute.** Michael Zwerdling. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2004, 384 pages, hardcover, \$65.

As a nurse with a background in historic graphics, this text’s author uses art postcards that illustrate nursing history. From the influences of royalty to war zones to an exploration of nursing in a variety of cultures, this book offers a visual history of our profession.

# WEBSITES

*Note.* All of the Web sites reviewed here have comprehensive privacy and disclosure statements, which are essential in assessing Web site quality.



**Your Cancer Risk ([www.yourcancer.risk.harvard.edu](http://www.yourcancer.risk.harvard.edu))** is authored by the Harvard School of Public Health. The site includes comprehensive cancer screening and risk analysis for many cancers such as breast, lung, pancreatic, and ovarian.



**Cancer Prevention and Control ([www.cdc.gov/cancer](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer))** is a federal government site that is prepared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and receives no outside funding. Fact sheets for each disease

and national and state data about cancer risk are provided.



**Cancer.Gov: Cancer Prevention (<http://www3.cancer.gov/prevention>)** is authored by the National Cancer Institute Division of Cancer Prevention. This site includes extensive content about preventing and detecting specific cancers (e.g., skin, stomach, esophageal), lifestyle factors, and clinical trials and research opportunities in prevention.



**State Best Practices in Cancer Prevention and Control ([www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org))** is a national clearinghouse of best practices in cancer control and prevention. Support is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The site is prepared

by multiple authors, including the National Governors Association.



**Cancer Prevention Conversations (<http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/prevention>)** is written by the Medical School Faculty and Communications Technology Department of Michigan State University. This site complements the Cancer Prevention Park CD-ROM and focuses on four cancer prevention areas: nutrition, specifically fruits, vegetables, and fat content in foods; physical activity; sun exposure; and exposure to tobacco and secondary smoke. Also included is a comprehensive list of commonly asked questions that are answered by experts in addition to the personal stories of those who have made changes in their lives in an effort to prevent cancer.

*Elizabeth Gomez, RN, MSN, AOCN®  
Editor, ONS Web site*



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