

It is my great pleasure to publish a special book on gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST) in both English and Chinese as a one of the authors as well as a co-honorary Editor-in-Chief. The book has collected from the articles published in AME journals systematically, and covers the latest topics on the pathogenesis, diagnosis and treatment of GIST. Furthermore, the book contains concrete case reports, from which the readers could share medical knowledge and experience important for their clinical practice in near future.

The practice of medicine is an art, based on science (1). On boundary of the Century, the concept of GIST and its diagnosis and treatment were tremendously changed (2). For example, based on the molecular mechanism of tumor cell proliferation, molecular-targeted drugs of imatinib, sunitinib, and regorafenib, have been developed and the clinical practice guidelines have been published since 2004 (3). GIST is, however, rare cancer. There are a few specialists. Most general surgeons and physicians, who may occasionally take care of GIST patients, may have limited experiences and restricted, and sometimes outdated, information due to drastic changes in clinical practice and due to rapid increase in medical information. So, physicians and surgeons should always update their skills and medical knowledge in the field of oncology developing very rapidly, like GIST. Nevertheless, rare cancer sometimes lacks disease information, especially well-organized information, covering wide-range of clinical practice and science. To be timely, here, we publish a brand new book with latest information of GIST from the pathogenesis to the diagnosis and treatment.

Finally, Sir William Osler, the greatest and respectable physician in the end of the 19th century, once said “To study the phenomena of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to go to sea at all” (1). A good book is a guide for students and doctors in terms of medical education and development, and is indispensable for nurturing a good doctor. I sincerely hope that this book may have potential to make a doctor an excellent and talented physician or surgeon who treats GIST. Thus, it is my expectation that the book will provide effective learning chances and referenced resource for medical professionals caring GIST patients in the clinical practice, resulting in improved patient care and outcomes. I also gratefully appreciate the editors and authors contributing the book by accepting their manuscripts to publish in this book.

References

1. Stone MJ. The wisdom of Sir William Osler. *Am J Cardiol* 1995;75:269-76.
2. Nishida T, Blay JY, Hirota S, et al. The standard diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of gastrointestinal stromal tumors based on guidelines. *Gastric Cancer* 2016;19:3-14.
3. Demetri GD, Benjamin R, Blanke CD, et al. NCCN Task Force report: optimal management of patients with gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST)--expansion and update of NCCN clinical practice guidelines. *J Natl Compr Canc Netw*. 2004 May;2 Suppl 1:S-1-26; quiz 27-30.



Toshirou Nishida, MD, PhD, FACS
Director,
National Cancer Center Hospital,
5-1-1 Tsukiji, Chuoku, Tokyo 104-0045, Japan