



This handbook is disappointing because it promises to address, in a practical manner, an area of vital importance to those who participate in the care of seniors. Unfortunately, it does not live up to this promise, and indeed may lead to labelling and irreparable damage being done to family units.

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Making Choices: Treatment of Stage IV (Metastatic) Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer. A Decision Aid for Patients

(Cassette tape and workbook). W.K. Evans, A.M. O'Connor, V. Fiset, J. Logan, C. DeGrasse. 1997. Price not stated. Available from Ottawa Civic Hospital Loeb Research Institute; 888 240-7002.

Overall rating: Excellent
Strengths: Fills a need of patients with lung cancer as well as their physicians and other allied health professionals, in individualizing treatment for stage IV non-small cell lung cancer.
Weaknesses: None
Audience: Patients suffering from lung cancer, family physicians, oncologists, nurses working with cancer patients

Stage IV non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is very common and historically has a poor prognosis. This cassette tape and workbook were produced to enable patients with advanced lung cancer to choose the most appropriate form of therapy for their situation. The booklet will guide patients in the choice between supportive care with radiation therapy

or supportive care with both radiation therapy and chemotherapy. This is one of the most important decisions a patient faces at a time of great stress. The booklet's clear language and use of icons and diagrams is helpful. The descriptions of cancer, radiation therapy and chemotherapy are easy to understand.

The Ontario Cancer Treatment Practice Guideline Initiative recently published a clinical practice guideline for chemotherapy in stage IV NSCLC.¹ The guideline states that there is evidence of a small survival benefit of cisplatin-based chemotherapy over best supportive care in patients with NSCLC (absolute benefit is 10% at 1 yr). Quality of life can also be improved with chemotherapy, but as yet there is only evidence from non-randomized trials. Therefore, there is a need for patients to be informed when they face the decision of the best treatment in their individual situation. Because the survival benefit is modest this booklet and cassette tape are a valuable tool. They could also be a model for other disease sites where the benefits of therapy are similar.

The instructions are clear; it would take 35 to 40 minutes to complete the tape while following along in the booklet. As a further aid, examples at the end illustrate 3 possible outcomes.

As newer chemotherapeutic agents, e.g., paclitaxel, are introduced, responses and median survivals are improving, but for now, this booklet is an invaluable aid for patients and their physicians.

Reference

1. Lopez GL, Stewart DJ, Newman TE, et al. Chemotherapy in stage IV (metastatic) non small cell lung cancer. *Cancer Prev Control* 1997;1:18-27.

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Healthy Eating for 2: Mother and Baby

Booklet. Edited by Alana LaPerle Consulting. 48 pp. Illust. Capital Health, Community Care and Public Health, Edmonton. 1996. Price not stated. Culturally adapted and translated into 6 other languages.

Overall rating: Excellent
Strengths: Comprehensive and informative, written in plain language
Weaknesses: Some inaccuracies in the Mandarin and Cantonese translations; major problems with Vietnamese version; Spanish, Punjabi and Polish versions were not reviewed
Audience: Pregnant women and new mothers

Generally, this is an excellent resource, written in plain language and geared toward pregnant women and new mothers. The 3 topics are "Healthy eating for mother and baby," "Breastfeeding" and "Food for your infant."

The content is in keeping with Canada's Food Guides and with the soon-to-be-released (June '98) Perinatal Nutrition Guidelines from Health Canada. The content is general and solid. It should not be considered a reference for clinicians but rather for clients (patients).

The format is attractive; there are helpful illustrations, information in bullets and a question-and-answer section. The booklet includes practical tips and refers the reader to health professionals for further advice or assistance.

The Chinese and Mandarin versions have been adapted in a very culturally sensitive way. The information has been translated accurately, with a few minor exceptions.

In contrast, the Vietnamese version has major inaccuracies in both content, printing and cultural appropriateness. It should not be recommended for this group of newcomers.

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on the Punjabi, Polish or Spanish versions.