

Preface

Head and neck cancer – defined here as cancers of the oral cavity, pharynx, and larynx – comprises a fascinating tumor model. With two well established risk factors – tobacco and alcohol – and the potential for screening, these tumors provide unique opportunities for prevention and control. Further, the known etiological factors also help frame studies of mechanisms and susceptibility. Finally, the role of the human papillomavirus (HPV) offers another cancer model to investigate the viral etiology of cancer.

This context has led to wonderful interdisciplinary research opportunities among clinicians, epidemiologists, and molecular biologists and geneticists. In that spirit, we have brought together the world's experts on the epidemiology, clinical aspects, and molecular biology of head and neck cancer. The book includes a spectrum of research foci from descriptive epidemiology to molecular biology. I hope that active researchers in the field of head and neck cancer will find these current summaries useful to guide their research as well as drawing in those not working on this cancer. The book illustrates much of what is known and also highlights the many unanswered questions.

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