





The Best News about Radiation Therapy: How to Cope and Survive

	<p>Author: Carol L Kornmehl, MD, FACRO Publisher: Academic Radiation Oncology Press ISBN: 0-9721896-0-2</p> <p>OncoLinkRating:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☆☆</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>
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Dr. Carol Kornmehl has written a book that fills an important niche that was previously missing in cancer patient education. There are many resources available to those going through chemotherapy or undergoing oncologic surgery. However, there is a paucity of information on [radiation therapy](#), which is a very common and essential portion of multidisciplinary cancer treatment. Therefore, *The Best News about Radiation Therapy: How to Cope and Survive* can be beneficial for patients who have questions about their course of radiation.

The book concentrates on delivering information and dispelling myths about radiation oncology; both of which are sorely needed. This is done through the eyes of many actual patients who actually had radiation for various cancers. This serves to identify with the reader, likely making it apply more personally. Many aspects of radiation therapy are covered, from simulation to treatment course to toxicity to coping strategies. As virtually every aspect of a radiation treatment course is dictated by the body site that is being treated, it is impossible to subscribe general information that will adequately cover everything. Hence, Dr. Kornmehl wisely addresses each subject based on disease type and radiation field location. This is extremely important and an effective method of dispersing information.

The field of radiation oncology and cancer care in general is very technical. Therefore, the author may not be at fault for at times talking above the level of understanding most patients may have. However, to supplement this, she included a glossary of terms so that it may be easier to follow. Other critiques are that some of the figures and diagrams have terms not discussed in the text, which may add to the confusion. Also, as the information is told through stories of particular patients, there is often the tone that the patient's treatment course is the only path that could have been taken, which is obviously not the case. Again, Dr. Kornmehl attempts to dispel this by often offering alternative treatments, possible toxicities, etc.

The full range of aspects of radiation therapy are discussed (with the puzzling exception of CT simulation, which is becoming more and more popular) from intraoperative radiation to brachytherapy, hyperthermia, and stereotactic radiosurgery. This is a strength of the book. However, the main strength continues to lie in the clever site-specific approach and personal identification patients will have upon reading the book. The "Frequently Asked Questions" section is also excellent, again dispelling many of the myths about radiation therapy. *The Best News about Radiation Therapy: How to Cope and Survive* could therefore be very useful for patients undergoing radiation therapy.

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