

Preface

Esophageal cancer is cancer arising from the esophagus—the food pipe that runs between the throat and the stomach. Symptoms often include difficulty in swallowing and weight loss. Other symptoms may include pain when swallowing, a hoarse voice, enlarged lymph nodes ("glands") around the collarbone, a dry cough, and possibly coughing up or vomiting blood.

The two main sub-types of the disease are esophageal squamous-cell carcinoma (often abbreviated to ESCC), which is more common in the developing world, and esophageal adenocarcinoma (EAC), which is more common in the developed world. A number of less common types also occur. Squamous-cell carcinoma arises from the epithelial cells that line the esophagus. Adenocarcinoma arises from glandular cells present in the lower third of the esophagus, often where they have already transformed to intestinal cell type (a condition known as Barrett's esophagus). Causes of the squamous-cell type include tobacco, alcohol, very hot drinks, poor diet, and chewing betel nut. The most common causes of the adenocarcinoma type are smoking tobacco, obesity, and acid reflux.

In the present book, twenty-two typical literatures about esophageal cancer published on international authoritative journals were selected to introduce the worldwide newest progress, which contains reviews or original researches on esophageal cancer. We hope this book can demonstrate advances in esophageal cancer as well as give references to the researchers, students and other related people.