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Best Practice & Research Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/bpobgyn



Preface

The conservative management of reproductive tract cancers



It has only taken one generation for the exponential parallel growth of information about reproduction and about cancer to allow us to realistically now offer women and men fertility options which were hitherto thought impossible, even if considered at all. When we were junior doctors in the 1970s the idea of a conservative approach to managing patients with malignancy was not even considered, as radicality was the mantra in both surgery and radiation oncology and cytotoxic drug therapy was in its infancy with little or no information on resultant gonadotoxic effects. IVF was a still to be realised dream and ovulation induction in its infancy with the attendant problem of multiple births.

Forty years later we have a detailed understanding of pituitary-hypothalamic functioning and of ovarian function at both hormonal and molecular levels. The careful collection of staging based cancer statistics aligned with rigorous clinical data has allowed selection of patients for successful interventions which have allowed them a vision of personal fertility success and if not, surrogacy.

This volume aims to bring international experts in reproduction, cancer and medical ethics together to provide an up to date view of this new world and to give their vision of what might be possible in the future, with uterine transplantation being just one great example of what lies ahead.

It seems simplistic to just acknowledge their superb contributions. All are at the cutting edge, all are of course, extremely busy and all have provided outstanding academic overviews in their own particular areas of interest and expertise. We thank them for their wonderful generosity.

We also thank our numerous colleagues who have inspired us and of course, our patients who have so willingly volunteered their information to benefit others.

Last, but not least, we thank our wives and families for their love and unwavering support and Beverley Burns from Elsevier for her guidance and advice in getting this volume ready.

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