

Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Renal Cell Carcinoma

Updated October 23, 2009



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

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1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of professionals with expertise in diverse areas including experienced medical database researchers and practicing physicians who serve as members of the *Medifocus.com* Medical Advisory Board (MAB). This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for more meaningful discussions between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease

- Treatment options
- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done

- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

RENAL CELL CARCINOMA

Introduction to Renal Cell Carcinoma

The kidneys are two bean-shaped organs, one located on each side of the spine, that are an integral part of the urinary system. The primary function of the kidneys is to filter and cleanse the blood by removing excess water, salt, and waste products. The kidneys produce urine which then drains from the kidneys through two tubes known as the right and left *ureters* into the *urinary bladder*. The accumulation of urine in the bladder brings on the urge to urinate and, thereby, eliminate the waste products filtered by the kidneys. Urine leaves the body through a tube called the *urethra*.

In addition to filtering and cleansing the blood of waste products, the kidneys perform two additional vital functions:

- Regulation of blood pressure - The kidneys excrete excess sodium (salt) from the body that helps prevent high blood pressure (*hypertension*) from developing. The kidneys also help to regulate blood pressure by producing an enzyme called *renin*. When a person's blood pressure falls below normal levels (*hypotension*), the kidneys produce and pump renin into the bloodstream which raises the blood pressure by activating a mechanism known as the *renin-angiotensin-aldosterone* system.
- Secretion of hormones - The kidneys produce a hormone called *erythropoietin* that stimulates the production of red blood cells (*erythrocytes*) in the bone marrow. The kidneys also help to promote the growth of strong, healthy bones by regulating the levels of calcium and phosphorus in the bloodstream.

Renal (Kidney) Tumors

Tumors can grow in almost any organ in the body. Tumors that develop and grow in the kidneys are known as *renal tumors*. Renal tumors can be either benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Examples of benign kidney tumors include:

- Renal oncocytomas
- Renal angiomyolipomas

Examples of malignant renal tumors include:

- Transitional cell carcinoma
- Wilms' tumor

- Renal sarcomas
- Renal cell carcinomas

Renal Cell Carcinoma

According to the American Cancer Society, renal cell carcinoma (RCC) is the most common type of malignant kidney tumor and accounts for more than 90% of all renal tumors. The incidence of RCC has been steadily rising with approximately 51,000 newly diagnosed cases and nearly 13,000 deaths reported in 2007 in the United States. Renal cell carcinoma is more common in men than women with about 60% of cases occurring in men and about 40% in women. Most cases of renal cell carcinoma occur in adults between 50 to 70 years of age. Children and adolescents only rarely develop renal cell carcinoma.

Renal cell carcinoma represents about 3% of all cancers in adults and accounts for about 2% of all cancer deaths. In about 50% of patients who are diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma, the cancer is confined (localized) to the kidney. Locally invasive disease, where the cancer has spread outside the kidney, is present in about 25% of newly diagnosed patients. The remaining 25% of newly diagnosed patients have metastatic RCC where the cancer has already spread to distant sites such as the lungs or bones.

There are several types of RCC that can be differentiated on the basis of the morphology (appearance) of the cancer cells under a microscope. Approximately 75% of patients have the *clear cell* type of RCC. Other less common types of renal cell carcinoma include:

- *Papillary*
- *Chromophobe*
- *Collecting duct*
- *Sarcomatoid*
- *Medullary*
- A category called "Unclassified" RCC

Cancer cells, like other cells in the body, have a structure called the *nucleus* that stores the DNA genetic code of the cell. By examining the nucleus of a renal cancer cell under a microscope and comparing it to a normal kidney cell, doctors can determine to what degree or extent the nucleus of the renal cancer cell looks to be abnormal. Using this technique, doctors assign a *grade* to the renal cancer cells based on a numerical scale ranging from 1 to 4. This is known as the Fuhrman Grade. For example, renal cancer cells whose nuclei resemble those of normal kidney cells are assigned a grade of 1. In general, the lower grades (1 and 2) of renal cell carcinoma grow more slowly and tend to have a better prognosis (outlook) than the higher grades (3 or 4).

Risk Factors for Renal Cell Carcinoma

A *risk factor* is anything that increases a person's chances of getting a particular disease such as cancer. Researchers have identified a variety of risk factors for renal cell carcinoma (RCC). These risk factors include:

- Cigarette smoking - The risk of RCC increases with the number of cigarette packs smoked per year. Men who smoke appear to be at much higher risk for developing RCC than women who smoke.
- Obesity - Numerous studies have reported a positive correlation between severe obesity and RCC. Severe obesity appears to be a greater risk factor for RCC in women than in men.
- Kidney stones - Men with a history of kidney stones appear more likely to develop RCC than women.
- Occupational exposure - People who work in certain industries that involve exposure to iron, steel, and petroleum products appear to be at higher risk for developing RCC.
- Chemical exposure - Workplace exposure to certain chemicals and substances such as asbestos, cadmium, some herbicides, and organic solvents (e.g., benzene, trichloroethylene) also appear to increase the risk for developing RCC.
- Hypertension - Several case-control studies have been published which suggest that people with high blood pressure (*hypertension*) may be at increased risk for developing RCC. A class of antihypertensive drugs called *thiazides* may also increase the risk of developing RCC.
- von Hippel-Lindau Syndrome - A genetic disorder where patients lack the "VHL gene" resulting in the abnormal growth of blood vessels in some parts of the body. Patients with this syndrome have almost a 100% lifetime risk of developing renal cell carcinoma of clear cell histology. Recently, it has been demonstrated that normal VHL gene function is required to inhibit the overproduction of specific genes that promote *angiogenesis* (new blood vessel formation) in patients with clear cell renal cell carcinoma.
- Sporadic VHL gene mutations can also be found in patients with sporadic renal cell cancers of clear cell histology.
- Gender - RCC develops more frequently in men than in women with about 60% of all cases occurring in men.
- Family history - A family history of RCC increases a person's chances of developing this condition.

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Renal Cell Carcinoma**
- **Treatment Options for Renal Cell Carcinoma**
- **Prognosis for Renal Cell Carcinoma**
- **The Role of Complementary and Alternative Therapies in Cancer**
- **Quality of Life Issues in Cancer**
- **Questions to Ask Your Health Care Provider about Renal Cell Carcinoma**

To Order the Complete **Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** [Click Here](#)
Or Call 800-965-3002 (USA) or 301-649-9300 (Outside USA)

3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Review Articles - 65 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 36 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 33 Articles
- Surgical Therapy Articles - 40 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 52 Articles
- Immunotherapy Articles - 13 Articles
- Ablation Therapy Articles - 5 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed <January 2007 to October 2009>

Review Articles

1.

Treatment selection for patients with metastatic renal cell carcinoma: identification of features favoring upfront IL-2-based immunotherapy.

Author: Atkins MB
Institution: Division of Hematology/Oncology, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, MASCO Bldg, Rm 412, 375 Longwood Ave, Boston, MA 02215, USA. matkins@bidmc.harvard.edu
Journal: Med Oncol. 2009;26 Suppl 1:18-22. Epub 2009 Jan 23.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC016&ID=19165638>

2.

Treatment selection for patients with metastatic renal cell carcinoma.

Authors: Atkins MB; Choueiri TK; Cho D; Regan M; Signoretti S
Institution: Division of Hematology/Oncology, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, MASCO Bldg., Room 412, 375 Longwood Avenue, Boston, MA 02115, USA. Matkins@bidmc.harvard.edu
Journal: Cancer. 2009 May 15;115(10 Suppl):2327-33.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC016&ID=19402069>

3.

Targeted therapies in metastatic renal cancer in 2009.

Authors: Bastien L; Culine S; Paule B; Ledbai S; Patard JJ; de la Taille A
Institution: Departments of Urology and Oncology, INSERM U955Eq07, CHU Mondor Assistance Publique des Hopitaux de Paris, Creteil, France.
Journal: BJU Int. 2009 May;103(10):1334-42. Epub 2009 Mar 11.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=OC016&ID=19338565>

The **Guide to the Medical Literature** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** includes the following sections:

- Review Articles - 65 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 36 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 33 Articles
- Surgical Therapy Articles - 40 Articles
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- Immunotherapy Articles - 13 Articles
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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

CA - California

| <u>Name of Author</u> | <u>Institutional Affiliation</u> |
|-----------------------|---|
| Belldegrun AS | Department of Urology, David Geffen School of Medicine, University of California-Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA. |
| Crawford ED | University of California at Davis, Sacramento, California, USA. arlauska@med.umich.edu |
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| Kased N | Department of Radiation Oncology, University of California-San Francisco, 505 Parnassus Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94143-0226, USA. |
| Klatte T | Department of Urology, University of California-Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California. |
| Lam JS | Department of Urology, David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California-Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA. |
| Lara PN Jr | Department of Urology, 4860 Y Street, Suite 3500, University of California, Davis Medical Center, Sacramento, CA 95817, USA. |
| Nelson EC | Department of Urology, 4860 Y Street, Suite 3500, University of California, Davis Medical Center, Sacramento, CA 95817, USA. |
| Pantuck AJ | Departments of Urology and Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California-Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA. apantuck@mednet.ucla.edu |

The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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6 - Directory of Organizations

American Association of Kidney Patients

3505 E. Frontage Road; Suite 315; Tampa, FL 33607

800.749.2257; 813.636.8100

info@aakp.org

www.aakp.org

American Cancer Society

1599 Clifton Road NE; Atlanta, GA 30329-4251

800.227.2345; 404.486.0100

www.cancer.org

American Institute for Cancer Research; Nutrition Hotline

1759 R St. NW; Washington, DC 20009

800.843.8114; 202.328.7744

-
www.aicr.org

Association of Cancer Online Resources

www.acor.org

Cancer Care

275 Seventh Avenue; New York, NY 10001

800.813.4673

info@cancercare.org

www.cancercare.org

Cancer Caring Center

4117 Liberty Avenue; Pittsburgh, PA 15224

412.622.1212

info@cancercaring.org

www.cancercaring.org

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Renal Cell Carcinoma** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Renal Cell Carcinoma.

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