

IMAGING IN ONCOLOGY

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Modern surgical treatment of cancer requires an understanding of tumour staging systems, as in many instances the tumour stage will define appropriate management. The development of stage-dependent treatment protocols involving neoadjuvant chemotherapy and preoperative radiotherapy relies on the ability of imaging to determine stage accurately before surgical and pathological staging. The importance of accurate cancer staging is reflected in the central role of the radiologist in most MDT meetings. Once a diagnosis of cancer has been established, often by percutaneous or endoscopic biopsy, new imaging techniques can considerably improve the ability to define the extent of tumour, although the pathological specimen remains the 'gold standard'. Many staging systems are based on the tumour- node-metastasis (TNM) classification.

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