Overview of Debunking Urban Legends in Staging Series

• Identify the role of staging
  – Patient care
  – Data analysis

• Comprehend the general rules applied to staging
  – Separating fact from fiction
  – Rules for clinical and pathologic classifications
  – Rules for assigning T, N, M, and stage group

• Highlights of 7th Edition
Disease Process of Cancer

- Cancer originates in a single cell

- Cell continues to divide and grow
  - In organ of origin (primary site)
  - Spreads to adjacent tissue or regional node drainage areas
  - Spreads to distant organs or structures

- Cancer spreads
  - From primary through bloodstream into distant organs
  - Without involving adjacent organs and regional nodes

- Stage describes this process
What is Stage

• Detailed elements at a point in time
  – Local tumor extent and if it has spread from the organ or site of origin (primary site) – T category
  – Involvement by location or number of regional lymph nodes – N category
  – Distant metastatic spread through bloodstream or lymphatics – M category

• Detailed elements grouped into broad categories
  – Anatomic Stage/Prognostic Groups – Stage I through IV

• Points in time of the cancer patient’s care
  – Diagnostic workup – clinical classification
  – After treatment – pathologic classification
Why Stage

• Staging is a common language
  – Developed by medical professionals
  – Used to communicate information about a disease

• Staging is designed to
  – Aid in patient treatment planning
  – Give some indication of prognosis
  – Assist in evaluation of treatment results
  – Facilitate exchange of information
  – Contribute to continuing investigation of cancer
  – Support cancer control activities
Role of Staging – Patient Care

• Clinical stage
  – Assess cancer at time of diagnosis and workup
  – Cancer treatment guidelines based on stage

• Pathologic stage
  – Assess cancer after surgical resection as primary treatment
  – Prognosis and survival information based on stage
Role of Staging – Data Analysis

• Facilitates data collection and analysis worldwide

• Used to develop treatment guidelines

• Evaluate results of treatment

• Prognosis and survival information
Chapter 1 – 7th Edition
AJCC Cancer Staging Manual

• Expanded text
  – Everything you always wanted to know

• Clearly defined rules
  – Debunks rumors and urban legends

• Tables of rules
  – General rules
  – Classifications
  – T, N, and M
  – Stage groups