Bevacizumab in Combination Chemotherapy for Colorectal and Other Cancers

The therapeutic monoclonal antibody bevacizumab has improved the palliative care of patients with cancer that has spread from the colon, rectum, or anal canal. Bevacizumab’s ability to block the actions of vascular endothelial growth factor, which stimulates blood vessels to grow toward tumor cells, has raised researchers’ interest in using the drug against a variety of cancers.

Improved Control of Medication Use with an Integrated Bar-Code-Packaging and Distribution System

Placement of a machine-readable bar code on every package of medication enabled medical center pharmacy personnel to dramatically improve their accuracy in selecting products from stock. Also, pharmacy technicians now need two weeks—down from three months—to learn how to replenish the unit-based medication-dispensing cabinets and retrieve individual doses. The instances of urgently needing to obtain medication stock from another pharmacy have greatly decreased as well.

The Other Side of the Human Genome

As one of the most accessible health professionals to ambulatory patients, pharmacists can anticipate being asked about genetic medicine, pharmacogenomic “personalized medicine,” and nonprescription genetic-testing products. But in addition to being able to answer patients’ questions about legitimate applications of genetic information, pharmacists must appreciate the sordid history of how the human race, including members of the health professions, has misused this information. In this article, a pharmacy leader examines the sometimes-forgotten side of scientific exploration into human genetics.