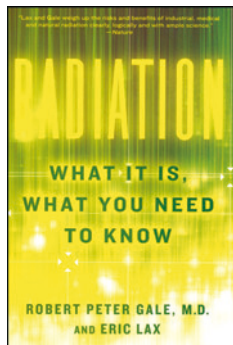


An informative and readable work about radiation



Robert Peter Gale, Eric Lax

Radiation

What it is, what you need to know. 271 pages.

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Radioactive sources are in use everywhere – in industry, at airport security checks, and above all in medicine. However, little is generally known about radiation. For many, it is a word with negative connotations, often reinforced by sensationalist negative reports in the media.

Robert Peter Gale is a haematologist with an interest in nuclear medicine. He first made his name internationally in 1986 when, in collaboration with Russian colleagues, he performed bone marrow transplants on 13 rescue workers from Chernobyl. Eric Lax is a writer by profession who until now has been best known for his biographies of famous film stars. This rather unlikely pair have now written a book about radiation in theory and practice, showing that they have mastered the art of simple presentation without simplifying the topic itself. Out of this has come a book which may also be interesting to readers with no special prior knowledge of the subject. The balanced way in which the authors present both useful aspects and risk factors of radiation is particularly worth highlighting. A great deal of space is also devoted to discussing the association between radiation and cancer risk, which is only formally documented for doses of more than 100 mSv. Based on more theoretical considerations, there is nevertheless evidence that such an association should also apply for low doses of radiation. Furthermore, they provide a thorough discussion on the use of radiation in diagnostics and treatment, with particular emphasis on the benefits and safety compromises involved.

In addition the book includes an interesting discussion on the benefits and negative aspects of nuclear power compared to other sources of energy.

I particularly recommend this book to students, doctors and others who either use or will use radioactive sources and x-ray examinations in their daily work.

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