

Textbook of MEDICINE

Textbook of MEDICINE

5th Edition

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Textbook of Medicine

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*This book is dedicated to my alma mater –
Medical College and Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram –
where I started learning the first principles of medicine and
thereafter; had the honour to serve as its staff and
continue my close association with the college
even several years after my retirement*

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Preface to the Fifth Edition

This volume has evolved through four editions, the fourth one was published in 2002. The first edition was introduced as 'A Short Textbook of Medicine', now it has increased in the volume of contents and improved in its quality, commensurate with the quantitative and qualitative advancements in medical information.

Six years is too long a gap for a textbook to be up-to-date and useful, but the demand among students and teachers were the guidelines to continue with the fourth edition until 2008.

As mentioned earlier, the book has been given a new direction, both in its get up and format, so as to include the latest information and present it in a student-friendly manner. This book has been designed to include the up-to-date information obtainable from print material and electronic data and has been presented in a simple language in form of direct statements, so as to make the matter more vivid and comprehensible to the medical students and doctors in India and the neighbouring countries coming from different social and language backgrounds. In areas where more detailed information is desirable for the practitioners and the postgraduate students, authentic reviews and original works are referred to.

Several new figures, many of them taken personally by the contributors from their own clinical practice and flow charts and tables have been added.

Along with several chapters a short summary is given to serve as a ready-reckoner for the students preparing for the examination or the busy practitioners who have only limited time at their disposal.

This volume is intended for the use of undergraduate and postgraduate students of medicine, dental sciences and other allied subjects, students preparing for entrance examinations and practitioners working in India and the neighbouring countries.

All the sections have been thoroughly revised. The number of contributors has also increased including teachers in specialities who have made their mark in their respective specialisation.

The first edition of the "Short Textbook" was produced in 1986 to fulfil a long-felt and widespread need among the undergraduate and postgraduate students, majority of whom relied on class notes or handbooks written on the various subjects by several authors. Many had no access to textbooks and the big volumes available were beyond their understanding. Comprehensive textbooks catering to the needs of the undergraduate medical students written by Indian authors were only a handful. Books published in other countries are quite freely available to our students, but naturally their emphasis is on the conditions prevailing in those countries.

The medical problems of India are unique as the peculiar disease-spectrum here is a blend of what is seen in the affluent countries with what is seen in most developing countries. This Textbook of Medicine has been written with this picture in mind. The section on tropical diseases, which usually gets a separate deal in most of the western textbooks, has been dovetailed into the other sections such as infections, physical agents, nutrition and others to improve the understanding of these subjects. Almost the whole of India is in tropical belt and therefore diseases rampant in tropical countries with a few exceptions like trypanosomiasis, onchocerciasis and others are present in all parts of the country.

This book has its companion volume "Clinical Medicine" third edition edited by me and published by the same publishers in 2005. It gives in detail the clinical aspects of medical practice and investigations. The reader is referred to "Clinical Medicine" for further details on physical examination, clinical symptoms, signs and investigation procedures.

Obsession with the printed matter is the habit of the mediocre; the wise go beyond it and use their common-sense, experience and creativity to form their own decisions.

My contributors have strived hard to collect the material and present it the way it has been done. All of them are veteran teachers and their presentations will be helpful to the entire readership. This book is the collective effort of the whole team, laying emphasis on several aspects of Internal Medicine with special emphasis on conditions prevailing in India and the neighbouring countries.

Human efforts by themselves are lifeless "*karma tat jadam*" (Ramana Maharshi in his Upadesa Sara). They get life and effect only when blessed by the Almighty to achieve the desired effect. This is especially so in medicine, in that both the patient and his physician have to be lucky to get the best results of investigation and treatment. I wish and pray to Almighty, the first physician in the universe to bless all and alleviate suffering. Yajurveda proclaims "*prathamo daivyo bhishak*" meaning the "first physician is God". I would consider the work of my teammates and myself fulfilled, if the young entrants into the medical profession in India and the neighbouring countries find this book useful in his studies and career.

K.V. Krishna Das

Preface to the First Edition

This book is written to fulfil a long-felt and widespread need among the undergraduate students. A questionnaire sent to several hundreds of clinical students revealed that majority of them rely on class notes, and handbooks written in the subject by several authors. Many had no access to textbooks in the subject and the big volumes available were beyond their understanding. Comprehensive textbooks catering to the need of undergraduates written by Indian authors are only a few. Books published in other countries are quite freely available to our students, but naturally their emphasis is on conditions prevailing in their lands.

The medical problems of India are unique in that the disease-spectrum is a blend of what is seen in the affluent countries with what is seen in developing countries. This book has been written with this picture in mind. The section on “tropical diseases” which usually gets a separate deal in most of the textbooks has been dovetailed into the other sections such as infections, physical agents, nutrition, etc. It is my feeling that with modern jet travel and the rapidly changing life-styles of Indian subjects, all diseases—the most modern and the most ancient are likely to be encountered by the clinical student in this country. Moreover, the so-called tropical diseases which used to be confined to the tropical belt, are now seen widely all over the world as a result of free and fast migration of population.

I consider my purpose fulfilled if the undergraduates in this country find this book useful.

K.V. Krishna Das

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