

## Translational Ayurveda



Translational Ayurveda, **Editors** Sanjeev Rastogi, 2019,  
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illustrations, 14 illustrations in colour

This surprising book comes at the right moment and brings new perspectives in a very complex field.

Translational Research is, in the area of Research and Development, the step between Basic research or Discovery and Clinical Research. From many years the Translational agenda of modern medicine is in deep crisis. The bench-to-bedside process is far too long and expensive, the average time from a new discovery to therapy is approximately 13 years with a failure rate of 95 percent. This area is so critical that it has been recently named as “Valley of Death”. The reasons of this failure are complex and of diverse nature. They range from the rush of getting new products without a real advancement in the understanding of human pathophysiology, to rigid and inefficient clinical trial designs, to commercial and financial constraints and limitations, to the excessive faith in therapeutic concepts based on experimental conditions not representing the nature of human health and disease. But probably the biggest problem is the inability to

implement the intimate meaning of Translational Research, namely the interdisciplinary network and collaboration. These elements are needed to convey the true meaning of a laboratory discovery in the real life of a patient and change the fate of a disease. The interdisciplinary issue is an hard point for modern science because it is linked in some way to its epistemology. The conceptual gaps between different areas of modern science and medicine are wide and sometimes unbridgeable.

The concept of Translational Research is embedded in *Āyurveda*, it is included in its very essence. Its model can be summarized as from observation and clinical practice to theory and then clinical practice again. It is a model based on facts and observations, not hypothesis-driven. However, the knowledge and the wisdom of *Āyurveda* in order to be fully applied needs to be understood, extracted from the classical knowledge and contextualized in modern terms. Unfortunately, this process is currently underestimated by the modern community of *Āyurveda*. We witness a frenetic rush to validate the effectiveness of *Āyurveda* and to legitimate it to the eyes of modern medicine, without deeply understanding the underpinning fundamentals. The immense power of *Āyurveda*, capable to quickly convey health solutions of various kind, is frustrated by the incapability of translating its inner wisdom in contextualized form usable and sharable in the modern world. There is an urgent need of a reorganization of contemporary *Āyurveda* research system and methodology in a way that respects its classical roots and epistemology. But this can only be achieved if one believes in *Āyurveda* as an autonomous system of knowledge and change perspective accordingly.

In this respect comes the book “Translational *Āyurveda*” edited by Prof. Sanjeev Rastogi. This work is undoubtedly a milestone that contribute to pave the way

to a new understanding of the potential of Âyurveda. Moreover it fosters an increased awareness in its inner translational values. The authors, expertly orchestrated by the editor, accompany the reader in a clear and deep analysis of the various possibilities offered by Âyurveda and gradually induce new thoughts and perspectives. The first part of the book, which deals with the fundamentals, examines in depth the potential bases in which the translational value of Âyurveda is rooted. The second part provides concrete examples of clinical applications on challenging health issues such as cancer, diabetes, dermatology and sleep medicine, offering important elements of reflection even to modern health specialists. However, a careful reading of the book reveals that the real translational potential of Âyurveda is not based only on the discovery of drugs or on its many other therapeutic techniques. If this were the case, Âyurveda would be reduced to a mere container of herbs and procedures. But this is not the case, the Translational power of Âyurveda involves a system of thought, a different perspective of perceiving reality and doing science. The true Translational value of Âyurveda is its epistemology and vision of Nature. The book deals with this issue with clarity and offers all readers the elements to deepen the topics and change their mindsets. In this context, of particular interest is the chapter on “Âyurveda abroad” by Christian Kessler, which focuses on elements like geographic, ethnical and cultural diversity between countries. These are in fact crucial elements to consider for the translational process of Âyurveda, both with regard to the biochemical diversity of herb species or nutritional habits, and in relation to all those cultural factors necessary to share and apply in different environments of epistemology and the fundamentals of Âyurveda.

“Translational Âyurveda” edited by Prof. Sanjeev Rastogi is of paramount importance to anyone involved in medical and health research, whether in the field of Âyurveda or modern medicine. It offers elements necessary to inspire new thoughts and

consciousnesses for the realization of Âyurveda in its fullness and to apply its already translational nature.

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