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Foreword

I am indeed delighted to know that a book on some of the important Tropical diseases is on the anvil. I congratulate Dr. Ashish Bhalla and other authors for bringing out an update on these diseases, which we have been trying to control without much success. Though named as tropical diseases because of their unique prevalence in the tropical and subtropical regions, they are no longer confined to these latitudes. The climatic changes, deforestation, immigration, urbanization and the ease of International travel have helped their percolation into the raw temperate areas. Many of these diseases are vector borne. Earlier due to low temperature in these regions the vectors would either not survive or hibernate but today due to the green house effect and change in the ecology, these insects are able to not only survive but even thrive and contribute toward the diseases acquiring epidemic proportions.

Towards the beginning of 1980s, thanks to the available antibiotics and vaccines, we all came to believe that we had harnessed the microbes, only to be soon disillusioned by the sudden appearance of many newly emerging infections like the HIV, SARS, Avian Flu, Ebola, Marburg and other types of fevers and encephalitis caused by Arbo viruses that originated mainly in countries situated in the tropics and then acquired epidemic potential. Dengue and Chikungunya, categorized under neglected tropical diseases(LTD) by WHO are conditions which many tropical countries are struggling to control. Old diseases of the tropics like Malaria, Kala-Azar, Tuberculosis, and Leprosy have staged a mutational comeback, better armed with weapons like drug resistance. Even the Rickettsial diseases and scrub typhus have been reported from yet unknown geographical areas especially in India and South East Asia.

No doubt we have had some success stories. The eradication of smallpox and now near elimination of polio can give us much to feel satisfied about but we cannot afford to be complacent. The microbes have already demonstrated their capabilities. The specialty of tropical medicine therefore has to broaden its scope and update itself in order to meet the challenges ahead. The diseases have crossed their geographical borders, therefore, knowledge needs to be disseminated. Research and training in tropical diseases is an important WHO program to foster effective global research in these diseases. New drugs and treatment modalities have come up. Public Health measures and training are necessary to ensure preparedness for all eventualities and outbreaks. We have done well in the recent past in controlling the spread of diseases like SARS and Avian Flu and global efforts to control the deadly Ebola are showing results. Thus publications like this one are a step towards that preparedness because the syndromic approach adopted in this book to understand the diseases having similar clinical presentation will certainly help the clinicians in making quick and correct differential diagnoses without too much dependence on unnecessary investigation.

Students, teachers and public health personnel alike will find this book very useful.

Dr. Pratibha Narang
Dr. B.C Roy Awardee
Director Professor Microbiology
Ex Dean, MGIMS
Ex President Indian Association of Medical Microbiology (IAMM)
MGIMS, Sewagram, Wardha
Authors index

Anna Mani MD
Professor, Dept. of Medicine, Christian Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana

Anand M MD
Department of Internal Medicine, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh-160012

Anant Mohan MD, FCCP (USA)
Dept. of Pulmonary Medicine and Sleep Disorders, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi

Ashesh Dhungana MD
Dept. of Pulmonary Medicine and Sleep Disorders, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi

Ashish Bhalla MD, FICP,FICCM
Additional Professor, Department of Internal Medicine Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh. India.

Atul Saroch MD
Department of Internal Medicine, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh-160012

Bharti Mahajan MD
Assoc. Prof., Dept. of Pharmacology Dayanand Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana

Harbir Singh Kohli MD, DM (Nephro)
Professor, Department of Nephrology Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Sector 12, Chandigarh, India

Manish Modi MD, DM (Neuro)
Assistant Professor, Neurology Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research Sector 12, Chandigarh, India

Manoj Goyal MD, DM (Neuro)
Assistant Professor, Neurology Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research Sector 12, Chandigarh, India

Mary John MD, FICP
Professor, Department of Medicine, Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, Punjab, India.

Nargis K Bali MD
Department of Clinical Microbiology, SKIMS, Srinagar, J&K (India)

Navneet Sharma MD, MAMS
Professor, Department of Internal Medicine, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh-160012

Parampreet S Kharbanda MD, DM (Neuro)
Additional Professor, Neurology Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research Sector 12, Chandigarh, India

Parvaiz A Koul MD
Professor, Departments of Internal and Pulmonary Medicine, SKIMS, Srinagar, J&K (India)

Pritam Singh, MD
Sr Lecturer, Department of Medicine Govt. Medical College and Hospital, Chandigarh.

Rajneesh Joshi, MD, MPH, PhD
Professor, Department of Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Rajesh Mahajan MD
Prof., Dept. of Medicine Dayanand Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana

Sandeep Puri MD, FICP
Prof. & Head, Dept. of Medicine Dayanand Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana

Sanjay D’Cruz MD, DNB, DM (Nephro)
Reader, Department of Medicine Govt. Medical College and Hospital, Chandigarh.

Sanjay K Mahajan MD
Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla, HP

Shalini Dewan Duggal MD
Specialist Microbiologist, Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital, New Delhi.

SP Kalantri, MD, MPH
Professor, Department of Medicine, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Sevagram, Maharashtra

Susheel Kumar MD
Assistant Professor, Department of Internal Medicine Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research Sector 12, Chandigarh, India

Surinder Singh Thakur MD, FICP
Professor, Department of Medicine, Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla, HP

Tulsi Das Chugh MD
National Emeritus Professor of Microbiology, Former Professor and Head, PGIMS, Rohtak, Haryana.

Vikas Loomba MD
Associate Professor, Dept. of Medicine, Christian Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana

Virendra Singh MD, DM (Gastro)
Professor, Department of Hepatology Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India.

Vivek Kumar MD, DM (Nephro)
Assistant Professor, Department of Nephrology Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research Sector 12, Chandigarh, India
From the editor’s pen

At the outset, I must thank, Dr Pritam Gupta, Dean, Indian College of Physicians, for giving me the opportunity and the responsibility of producing a publication for the Association of Physicians of India. I must acknowledge the President API and the Secretary API who encouraged me to complete this task in time. Dr Dhruva Chaudhary was the guiding force behind this project and provided me constant support.

I must acknowledge all my friends & the authors of this update, without whose contribution, this project would not have seen the light of day. Words are not enough to thank my family and my friends, who stood by my side during this tough time.

I would fail in my duties if I do not acknowledge the efforts of Mr Kamal Bhalla for making the publication of this book a reality.

Finally, I must thank “God” for giving me the strength to turn this dream into a reality.

Hope this book is able to help physicians get “up to date” with common tropical infections and serve as a guide to them for better management of the patients.

Dr. Ashish Bhalla
Dedicated to

My parents (Asha and Satish Bhalla)
My wife (Ritambhra)
&
My children (Anika and Arnav)
## Update on Tropical Fever

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