

PREFACE

For 35 years, I have been a Radiation Oncologist serving more than 15000 patients in India, the UK and USA. Like any beginner, I too believed that pills, machines and incisions could cure all diseases. I had great pride in Radiotherapy techniques and the 'cure' it brought about in many of my patients. Failures after all were a part of the medical statistics!

As years went by, I started realising that the triad of Surgery, Radiation and Chemotherapy needed support to improve the quality of life of a cancer patient. Chasing a tumour or its shadow in an X-ray was insufficient. Any treatment, irrespective of its nature had to focus simultaneously on the disease as well as the patient. It was similar to nurturing both the soil and seeds with equal attention to derive a better yield. In 1973 while at the Jaslok Hospital, I had to perform a radium implantation operation on a patient suffering from third stage cancer of the uterus. Seeing her condition, Vaidya S. S. Bhave, a colleague of mine hesitatingly asked me if he could try out Ayurvedic medications on her. Since there was hardly anything further to do, I gave him the green signal. Under Vaidya Bhave's care, supplementing the main course of radiation treatments, the patient started showing rapid improvement. She had fewer side reactions. Later on, in the periodic check-ups, she appeared a picture of health and for almost 25 years thereafter was free of the disease.

This incident prompted me to turn to Vaidya Bhave for more inputs on Ayurveda. He found my unprejudiced approach encouraging and happily acquainted me with *Sushrut Samhita*, the famed Ayurvedic text. Its complex narration or basic tenets of application did not intimidate me. Perhaps, genetically I had an affinity for this ancient medical science. My mother Dr. Laxmibai Kulkarni was a well-known Ayurvedic physician. She died of cancer fighting it bravely until the end. My mother's competence and confidence in Ayurveda must have left a deep impact on me. I never realised it then or until a few years after my return on completion of the training abroad in oncology.

Around this time, I happened to meet Vaidya Sadanand Sardeshmukh in Mumbai. His intuitive healing powers and mastery over Ayurveda were amazing. We joined hands to research the effects of Ayurveda on cancer patients. Poojya Sardeshmukh Maharaj, father of Vaidya Sardeshmukh impressed with our work, suggested that we set up a Cancer Research Project at their Ayurvedic Research Centre in Pune. I am glad that this project initiated in 1994 is progressing as envisaged. Vaidya Narendra Pendse whom I came across in the early 1990s was another bright young Ayurvedic consultant from Pune to collaborate with me in such studies.

Leading Homeopathic practitioners such as Dr.Gunavante, Dr Rajan Sankaran, Dr. Jawahar Shah and others impressed me so much that I even attended a special course in Homeopathy. Dr Lara Shah, an established Homeopath helped me in my efforts to formulate a treatment mode for cancer patients. While, we found Homeopathy effective in controlling the sufferings and side reactions of modern cancer therapies, it did not offer a ready cure for cancer. Many Homeopaths, I know, would differ with me on this subject. I also experimented with Acupuncture, Meditation and even Hypnotherapy.

In 1998, Allegheny General Hospital at Pittsburgh in the USA invited me to work as the Medical Director of Integrated Medicine. A wave of Complementary Medicine was then sweeping all over America, Europe and other developed countries. Dr. Paul Lebovitz and Ms. Kathleen Krebs of the Integrated Medicine Department helped me get a wide exposure in this field. Trailblazers like Dr. James Gordon of Georgetown University, Dr Herbert Benson from Harvard, Dr. Bernie Siegel from New Haven and Dr. Andrew Weils from Arizona, also motivated me a great deal.

Modern Medicine by virtue of its established procedures and accomplishments over the last many decades enjoys an unparalleled position. When it fails to ensure a cure or induces side reactions, we tend to seek support and solace from other treatment methods commonly referred to as 'Alternative Medicine'. My endeavour has been to

devise a holistic approach in the treatment of cancer. In this, I have been fortunate to receive unqualified guidance and co-operation from the right people at the right time. I believe efforts of these and other open-minded scientists all over the world would give a new direction and impetus to the 21st century medicine.

The environment at the Bombay Hospital with which I was associated for a long time also turned out to be conducive to my experiments in composite therapy. Professional colleagues however chose to view my efforts with circumspection. Some of them branded me a ‘quack’ doctor, while the silent majority expressed a passing interest in the matter.

‘War Against Cancer’ reflects all that I could experience, observe and learn during all these years. For quite sometime, I have been toying with the idea of sharing this with the outer world. If it has materialised now, the entire credit must go to my wife Shreelekha. She has been a source of inspiration and support. She constantly egged me on to complete the manuscript as early as possible, reading it carefully and offering her criticisms and suggestions. I am also grateful to my friend Mr D. R. Nayar for his painstaking effort in going through the manuscript and offering valuable suggestions in its final presentation.

I must caution that the opinions expressed here are purely personal. It may or may not find ready acceptance with all. Further, I have neither suggested nor implied any claim or assurance in the name of a cure for cancer. Cancer is a serious disease. Whatever be the line of treatment, it needs the direct supervision and care of a competent medical practitioner. Doctors can only treat; the cure has to come from within you. Remember the old adage “Doctors treat; He heals”.