

HEMATOLOGY FOR THE UNDERGRADUATES

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PREFACE

Hematology is one of the oldest specialties in conception yet it is the youngest in its inception. Diseases like anemias and leukemias were known to the medical profession in the mid nineteenth century. The specialty in its simplified version was introduced in the western medicine in the latter half of the 20th century while in Pakistan it was practiced during this period in its more primitive form as a laboratory service only. Teaching the subject in the medical curriculum and its introduction in clinical practice was non-existent. Blood transfusion was given without any concept of its technicalities and adverse effects.

With the surge in technology in the field of hematology and blood transfusion, improvements in the diagnostic and therapeutic services became available only to a small sect of population. Teaching hematology at academic level was still a dream as late as the end of the last century. Technical and professional expertise in this critical but sorely neglected field was a far cry. With the acceptance of hematology as a specialty by the medical profession and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan (CPSP) and establishing a society of hematology at the national level provided a strong impetus for this specialty to come to the forefront.

It is however still sadly appreciated that a specialty which alone deals with disorders that collectively afflict half of the mankind is still waiting for its proper acceptance in the academic curriculum at undergraduate level. This is due to lack of appropriate and relevant teaching material for the undergraduates. Minimum contents of the subject in the undergraduate curriculum and insufficient number of health professionals in this field have also contributed to the unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Teaching of academic hematology is assigned only a minimum segment and the practical training at this stage is essentially non-existent. Teaching material is archaic and there is little effort on the part of the teachers and the taught to appreciate the therapeutic dimensions of hematology. There is limited understanding of the basis and pathophysiology of the genesis of laboratory and clinical features of various blood diseases. Rationalization of various therapeutic modalities is also the need of the hour. Reading material that is available to the undergraduates does not address these issues nor does it present the matter in a palatable format.

Purpose of writing this manuscript is to teach hematology to the undergraduates as a continuous spectrum relevant to the stage of curriculum. Every effort has been made to explain the pathophysiological basis of the signs and symptoms, diagnostic avenues and therapeutic modalities for the commonly encountered blood diseases.

In order to achieve these objectives, the manuscript is presented in four parts in conformity with the 3 professional examinations in the MBBS curriculum as listed below:

Part one	:	Hematophysiology	1 st professional curriculum
Part two	:	Hematopathology	3 rd professional curriculum
Part three	:	Clinical hematology	Final professional curriculum
Part four	:	Laboratory hematology	1 st professional curriculum

A useful and informative list of references is provided for acquiring additional knowledge by those who wish to learn the intricacies of various hematological disorders. It is hoped that this book with its novel approach, palatable format, academic information, emphasis on highlighting the basis of the genesis of clinicopathological spectrum of various blood diseases shall be warmly received and acclaimed by the readers.

(Muhammad Saboor & Moinuddin)

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***Dedicated to
All undergraduate medical students***

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