



**BOOK REVIEW**

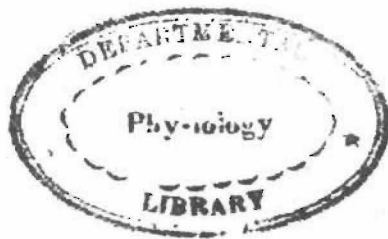
**NATURAL COMPOUNDS IN CANCER THERAPY** by John Boik.

Oregon Medical Press. March 2001.

Paperback, 520 pages, \$32.00, ISBN 0-9648280-1-4.

*Natural Compounds in Cancer Therapy* provides an excellent reference of the potential therapeutic uses of about forty selected natural compounds in cancer prevention and treatment. Despite a general recognition of the potential use of various natural compounds in various disease conditions, their full potentialities have generally not been exploited by western medicine, primarily because these compounds have not been examined under the texture of modern biomedical paradigm. Thus, these compounds are often tagged with an apathetic nomenclature like Alternative Medicine or Oriental Medicine. Of late, these terminologies are being romanticized and hence commercialised in patient care. The truth however is that there is a need for serious analysis of the actual potentially and efficacy of the natural compounds using valid and scientific evaluation systems rather than either overglorifying or under estimating them *apriori*. To this effect, *Natural Compounds in Cancer Therapy* by John Boik is a commendable attempt. In this book, Boik has examined actions, pharmacology, toxicology and use of vitamins, minerals, and a few well tested herbal and natural compounds as anticancer agents in the

backdrop of cellular and molecular biology of cancer, and he has included a huge number (nearly 4000) of references. Because of Boik's committed plan, fine organization, good diagrams, figures, schemes and composite tables, and above all his lucid language, this book shall be regarded as a handbook for a wide range of readers, from oncologists to cancer patients, from pharmacologists to physiologists, from clinicians of various disciplines to nurses, from scientists to common men. Additionally, this book will guide many research scientists to formulate research plan in cancer research. Most importantly, this book shall be considered as a yard stick of the serious endeavour towards examining potential therapeutic use of various natural compounds in health and disease for authors and experts committed to similar attempts in the future. Although out knowledge about natural compounds in health and disease is rather thin, similar attempts with such serious dimension shall surely open up newer vistas. To this end, John Boik's *Natural Compounds in Cancer Therapy* is a pioneering contribution to the medical literature. As an old oriental proverb goes, it really does not matter whether the sun rises in the east



or the west as long as it is sunny. Or, Professor Israel Barken writes: *I hope that one day we will not need to label medicine as alternative or traditional, complementary or integrative, Eastern or Western, but simply "Good Medicine".*

*Good medicine will be defined as medicine that prevents illness, cures disease, avoids, injury to the body, and brings comfort to the soul of the patient.* This book is highly recommended. It is reasonably priced. The publication quality is good.

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## NEWS

### 5TH SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS OF FEDERATION OF ASIAN AND OCEANIAN PHYSIOLOGICAL SOCIETIES (FAOPS) - 23-26 SEPTEMBER 2002

You are cordially invited to attend the 5th FAOPS Scientific Congress 2002 to be held in Kuala Lumpur from 23-26 September 2002 which will be hosted by The Malaysian Society of Pharmacology and Physiology (MSPP) in collaboration with the Federation of the Asian and Oceanian Physiological Societies (FSOPS).

The Registration fee will be approximately US\$ 200-250. Limited financial assistance will be made available. The cost of travel and subsistence in Malaysia is relatively cheap. There is a wide variety of hotels from budget to 5-star luxury: room rates start at about US\$ 15 in budget hotels in Kuala Lumpur. We are negotiating special rates for participants. Food can be found at varying prices one can eat quite well from as low as US\$ 3 per day.

For further information and Second Announcement, please contact: Secretariat: University of Malaya for Continuing Education, Level 3, Block C, IPS Complex, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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