
Preface

Believe it or not, the completion of this book has always been close to the top of my so-called “bucket list” items. This might sound a bit overly profound or histrionic, but it is accurate. When I volunteered in the Urology Department at the University of Michigan at the age of 18 years and then published my first paper in urology and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) while a student in college (age of 22), I still never envisioned a day where there would be enough material for a CAM book in urology. The dearth of overall attention to CAM and research was disappointing. Fast-forward several decades, initiating and completing some form of CAM research in urology departments around the world goes from rare to ubiquitous! What a pleasure it has been to watch healthcare professionals and patients in urology embrace some CAM options or even lifestyle changes that can profoundly impact their treatment, quality of life, and life expectancy. It has also been a pleasure for me to discourage the use of some CAM options for which no evidence-based merit exists and a potential for real harm is a reality.

It is important for all of us in the area of urology to remember almost every heart-healthy behavior that one can imagine is associated with a potential lower risk of urologic disease. And, most heart-unhealthy behaviors also contribute to a higher risk of diverse urologic diseases. Few medical specialties appear to have such a close correlation with cardiovascular health and risk compared to urology. And, it is this observation that we should never forget, because it allows all of us to visualize the forest as well as the tree, and “first do no harm” becomes a compassionate mantra and not just a cliché. It is an extraordinary and remarkable honor to empower patients with the ability to take control of their health or enhance the effects of their conventional treatment. This book is a symbolic testament and tribute to all those who have helped move CAM forward in my lifetime to the point where it has really become its own unique division or specialty within medicine and urology. Still there is much more work to do, and it is my hope this book inspires the young and the seasoned in urology to never stop appreciating the profound impact you have on your own health and that of others who cross your path for the rest of your life. I hope this book helps you in some tiny way to keep changing the world one starfish at a time.

All my best

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