

Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society Award for 2017

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Professor Kurpad is the Head of the Department of Physiology at St John's Medical College, Bangalore, India. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS), and of the International Union of Nutrition Sciences (IUNS). He has also been awarded the prestigious Wellcome Trust - India Alliance Margdarshi Fellowship in 2015. Born in 1959 at New Delhi, India, he completed his MBBS, MD and DNB in 1988 from St John's Medical College, and his PhD from Bangalore University in 1992. After stints as a Wellcome Trust Postdoctoral Fellow at the Rowett Research Institute, UK, and at the Dunn Clinical Nutrition Centre in Cambridge, UK, he returned to St John's at the Department of Physiology, and set up a stable isotope and physiology unit to work on protein and amino acid requirements. During this period, he primarily worked on accurately measuring human amino acid requirements. In these studies, he collaborated with Professor Vernon Young to set up a definitive, accurate stable isotope balance method to measure amino acid homeostasis in humans. That provided the basis of the 2007 WHO/FAO/UNU Expert Committee (he was the rapporteur of that committee) revision of the protein and amino acid requirements. He is presently working on the agriculture-nutrition connect to define the digestibility of legume proteins and find ways to improve this. He has been a member of the 2011 and 2013 FAO Expert Committees on Protein Quality. He is also working on improving the protein and iron content of cereals and millets.

In 2002, he was appointed the Founding Dean of an interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Institute at St John's. He built resource platforms in epidemiology, statistics, physiology, clinical research, informatics and molecular and structural biology, to bring together clinicians and basic science researchers in areas such as nutrition, infectious disease, non-communicable disease and cancer. When he stepped down in 2011, the Institute had initiated cohort studies of breast cancer, TB, non-communicable disease, pregnancy and childhood, and established the first formal bio-bank on an Indian health campus.

Since his work used stable isotopes in human physiology, he set up mass spectrometry laboratories and methods in body composition measurement, energy and amino acid metabolism and mineral absorption. In 2010, the IAEA created its first and only Collaborating Centre in Nutrition at St John's, under his leadership. In this role, he has conducted courses in stable isotope methodologies for students in the region, has consulted with the IAEA programs for nutrition in Africa and Asia, has been involved in setting up labs for stable isotope based body composition, energy expenditure and lactation measurements in several African and Asian countries, and has offered support in isotopic and scientific analyses to researchers in Asia and Africa.

He is the immediate past-President of the Nutrition Society of India (NSI) and chairs several national and international committees related to nutrition. Among these are the Scientific Advisory Group of the Nutrition Division of the Indian Council of Medical Research, the Protein Quality Group of the Nevin Scrimshaw International Nutrition Foundation, and the Scientific Advisory Committee of the National Institute of Nutrition, India. He has also been a member of many expert groups of the WHO, FAO, IAEA, Indian Council of Medical Research, Department of Biotechnology and the Ministry of Health.

He has delivered several Orations, including the Gopalan and Srikantia Orations of the Nutrition Society of India and the NUTRIM lecture of Maastricht University, and was the CV Raman State Young Scientist of the year in 2003. He has written over 300 papers, and is co-Editor of the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Associate Editor of the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, has edited the Asian Edition of Guyton's Textbook of Physiology, and written books and chapters in nutrition.

His exceptional contributions to the nutritionally-related health and well-being of peoples in the Asia Pacific region commend him for the Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Award in 2017.

Citation by
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President
Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society