

## BOOK REVIEW

Title: Food as Medicine

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The authors have attempted to put together a comprehensive book that focusses on how medicinal properties of common food components can be useful in improving health. The concept of 'Food as Medicine' has been around for centuries. But in the last three decades, scientists have made enormous progress in the isolation bioactive compounds from food components, elucidate their chemical structure and document their biochemical, cellular and physiological effects that can offer potential benefits to health. In this book, the authors have described the nutritional and traditional health uses of 16 natural foods (or food fractions), selected from either herbs, fruits, nuts, food components or bioactives (exm: mushrooms, onion, ginseng, ginger, garlic, amla, almonds, blue berries, curcumin, omega-3 fatty acids, olive oil etc.). Their chemical composition, phytochemistry, cellular effects both in vitro and in vivo animal models and potential for use as dietary supplements are described. The authors have done substantial literature survey and included key references that can be useful for interested students and researchers. The book also contains basic chapters dealing with antioxidant chemistry, their mechanism of action in the body and modulation of intracellular signaling circuits by food constituents that can be very helpful in understanding the mechanism of action of foods on health and disease. However, discussion on clinical studies in humans using food components and potential food/drug interactions are limited in this book. Interesting chapters on certain groups of bioactives (exm: olive oil, polyphenols etc) that have the potential to be developed into nutraceuticals for use in chronic diseases (heart disease, cancer etc.) are also included. The last chapter (rather briefly) deals with the systems biology of nutrition (which includes the 'Omic Sciences'). This area which relates to the interactions at the junction of food/genetics is the future and critical for planning 'Personalized Nutrition'.

In summary, this book is quite comprehensive and useful for graduate students and research fellows in the field of nutrition, dietetics, biochemistry, naturopathy, pharmacognosy. Also, scientists in the field of botanical medicine and nutrition will find valuable information in this book. I strongly recommend this book as a Reference resource for libraries associated with colleges of medicine, pharmacy, natural/chemical sciences and food companies.

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