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In Memoriam

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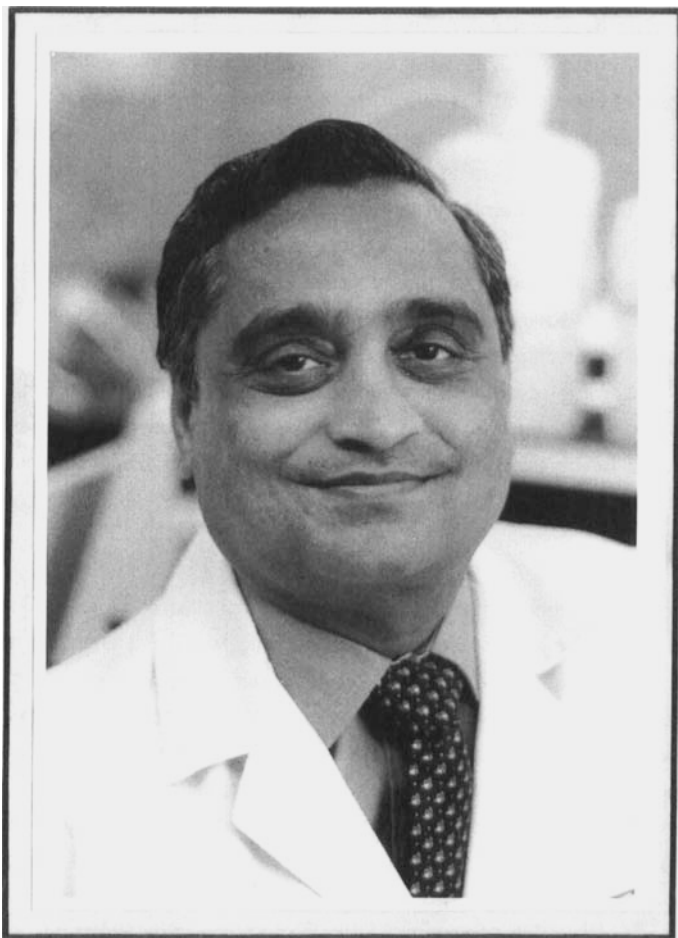
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IN MEMORIAM

POKAR M. KABRA, 1942-1990



Pokar M. Kabra and his wife died in the Air India accident in February. The suddenness of his tragic passing has left a void in the clinical laboratory community. With this memoriam mourning his death, the sorrow is lessened slightly as his life-time achievements have suddenly come into our focus. Thus, it may be fitting to celebrate his life and outstanding professional achievements, and to reflect on the many rewarding personal experiences.

Pokar's scholarly attribute was clearly marked by his receiving BS , first class in Chemistry in 1964 , and BS first rank in Pharmacy in 1966, both from University of Bombay. He then completed his Ph.D. degree in Biorganic Chemistry from the University of Kansas in 1972. After one year post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Wisconsin, Pokar joined the University of California at San Francisco in 1973. He was subsequently appointed as a faculty member in the Department of Laboratory Medicine, and was promoted to Associate Professor of Laboratory Medicine in 1981. Pokar was a dedicated scientist in the areas of applications of liquid chromatography for Therapeutic Drug Monitoring, and for the analysis of endogenous constituents, and more recently in molecular biology. He published over 60 research papers, reviews and monographs. In addition, he co-edited three highly regarded volumes on liquid chromatography for clinical analysis. He also served on the editorial boards of the Journal of Chromatography Biomedical Applications, and the Journal of Liquid Chromatography. Pokar had always maintained at the frontiers of clinical science, as demonstrated by his pioneering application of high speed liquid chromatography for clinical drug analysis, and by his widely adapted solid-phase extraction procedure for cyclosporine monitoring.

Pokar contributed significantly to the activities of scientific and professional societies. He was a founding member of the Therapeutic Drug Monitoring and Clinical Toxicology Division of The American Association for Clinical Chemistry, and served ably as its charter treasurer. More recently, he was a member of its nominating committee. As a devoted educator, Pokar was also active in training young scientists in his department. In sharing his expertise, Pokar was a sought-after speaker in both national meetings, and international meetings in Europe and Far East. He initiated the Therapeutic Drug Monitoring laboratory at the Bombay Hospital in India. In 1987, in recognition to his outstanding achievements, he was awarded an International Fellowship by the American Association for Clinical Chemistry. With that fellowship, Pokar visited, in 1988, Beijing Third Teaching Hospital to establish the cyclosporine monitoring by HPLC, and later in India, to further his effort in TDM.

Pokar was a supportive colleague and an approachable friend. In spite of his well-established reputation, Pokar was always reserved, and was genuinely interested in the welfare of his colleagues. Talking to Pokar about professional and technical problems invariably led into some philosophical perception and some helpful directions. Pokar was always fair in his judgement, and optimistic about the future. He recognized the changing focus of clinical diagnostics, and had diverged part of his research interest into molecular biology. On many phone conversations, I sensed his excitements, and shared his satisfaction of his new research findings.

In honoring his achievements, the Department of Laboratory Medicine at the University of California at San Francisco has established an Annual Lectureship* in the area of clinical analysis. This lectureship will affirm Pokar's timeless and significant contributions. On behalf of our professional colleagues and friends worldwide in the fields of clinical science and liquid chromatography, we extend our heart-felt sorrow and sympathy to his children, and his colleagues in the Department of Laboratory Medicine.

Steven H.Y. Wong

*Inquiries about the Pokar M. Kabra Lectureship are welcome, and should be directed to Lawrence J. Marton, M.D. Professor and Chairman, Department of Laboratory Medicine, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, CA 94143, USA. Tel. No. 415-476-5734.