

History

A Tribute to an Outstanding Indian Physician

Prof. Dr. M.R. Guruswami Mudaliar

1880–1958

Indian Physician



His Contributions...

- Prof. Dr. Guruswami was born in Nalamangala, Mysore province. His father was a prosperous building contractor. Sadly, he lost his father during his school days.
- With the great support of his mother, Guruswami completed his school education. He walked several miles to attend school. After schooling, he did his BA degree at Central College, Bangalore.
- Under the scholarship of the Government of Mysore, Guruswami studied medicine at Madras Medical College. He was an outstanding student and won the Gold Medal for Surgery.
- When the Doctorate was introduced in 1920, he received the Doctorate in Medicine at the University of Madras.
- He began his career at Madras Presidency Medical Department and initially he was posted at Tanjore District Headquarters Government Hospital, where he continued for many years.
- Subsequently, he served as a lecturer in anatomy at the Tanjore Medical School.



The Medical **Bulletin**

- During pre-independence most of the top jobs in Government hospitals in India were invariably given to British doctors.
- But luckily in 1915, Dr. Gurusami was transferred to Madras and got an opportunity to work in Madras Medical College.
- Moreover, he became the first Indian to get appointed as a Professor of Therapeutics at Madras Medical College in 1920. This post was regarded to be a very high position, which was earlier occupied only by the British. Also, he was deputed to England to study the teaching of therapeutics.
- In 1930, under his head the Department of General Medicine was started as a separate unit at Madras Medical College.
- In fact, he was widely known as an excellent bedside teacher, who diagnosed many diseases by percussion technique. The Britishers recognized his gift of diagnosis and mentioned him in their Journal *Materia-Medica* as the "Father of Medicine."
- Indeed, he was a man of few words. He often remarked that "Talking long and too much was a disease by itself" and every Friday he observed silence.
- Later, he took a leading role in the formation and inauguration of the Association of Physicians of India (API) in Chennai in 1944 and he became its founding member.
- He also served as a.....
- Director of the Indian Bank
- Member of the Legislative Council, Madras
- President of the Temple Renovation Committee, Madras
- President of TTV High School. He contributed 20 acres of land and significant funds to the school, now functioning as Dr. Guruswami Mudaliar TTV High School in Chennai.
- To honor Dr. Guruswami's fabulous service, his statue was installed at the entrance of Madras Medical College.
- As he lived in the Kilpauk area, Chennai, the popular bridge there was named after him as the "Guruswami Mudaliar Bridge" and a block in Kilpauk Medical College, Chennai is named after him. Also, the Tamil Nadu API chapter has introduced Dr. Guruswami Mudaliar Award for exemplary service in the field of medicine.

***Dr. Gowri Shankar
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