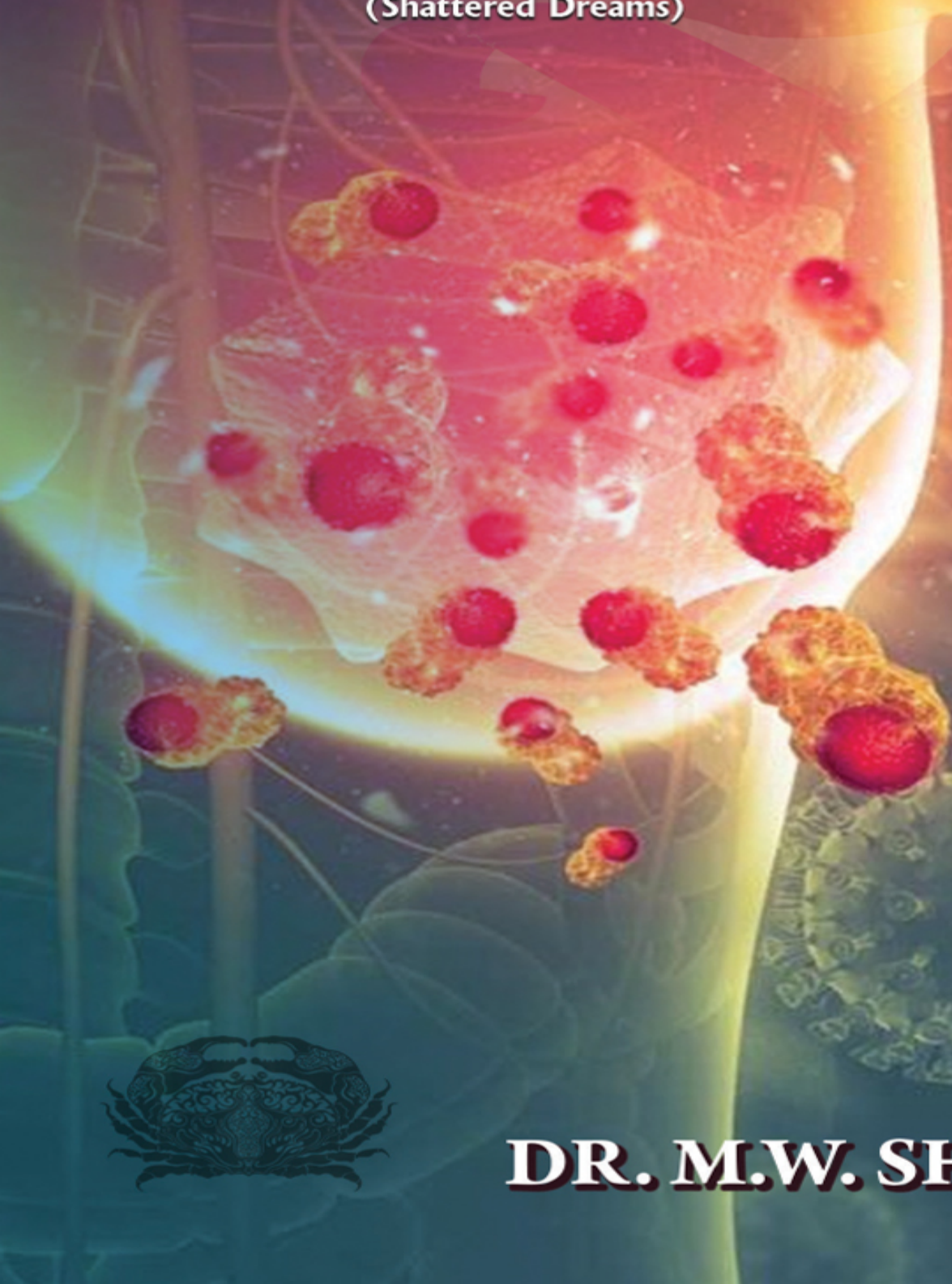


WOMEN

Under the Shadow of a Crab

A true story of a Teacher who fought breast cancer
(Shattered Dreams)



DR. M.W. SHAIKH

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Contents

Chapter I	The Shadow of the Crab
Chapter II	Introduction
Chapter III	A Dream Coming True
Chapter IV	What is Breast Cancer
Chapter V	Treatment for Breast Cancer
Chapter VI	Psychological Effects of Cancer
Chapter VII	Cancer a Struggle
Chapter VIII	Death and Remembrance
Chapter IX	How to Recover from Shocks of Cancer Death
<i>References</i>	

Chapter 1



The Shadow of the Crab

Crab is a ten footed crustacean having the first pair of legs modified as pincers. The crab also represents the zodiac sign or constellation cancer. Pincers are the gripping tool resembling scissors, but they are meant for holding the object or prey tight. Crab is the symbol or sign used by medical professionals and doctors for cancer, a famous disease.

The crab tries to chase every human being, animal. Crab doesn't understand male or female, young or old, poor or rich, caste or nation. It simply loves to attack the human being and bring them under its shadow, the pincers there after hold the prey tightly till it succumbs. Unfortunately, human beings cannot choose the disease of their choice but disease chooses a human being.

Crab is fond of male human and attacks the most favorite place i.e. throat, esophagus, lungs, prostate glands and testicles. To enter the male body opportunity is given by the habits like smoking, drinking and use of tobacco. In female the best place for cancer is breast, ovary, lungs, and cervix. To enter the female body opportunity is given by certain habits.

Cancer can be defined as uncontrollable growth of cells forming tumors inside the human body, destroying the immune system and by stopping the functions or vital organs resulting in multiple organ failure and death. It is a disease which is yet to be conquered. It is treatable but not curable. In few cases, if it is detected earlier the patient may survive and is out of the claws of crab, but their lives are under the fear of shadow of a crab.

Every human who is around 40 years of age is likely to fall under the shadow of the crab and needs to be careful. They must meet the crab hunters i.e. the doctors to find out whether they are being chased by the

crab. Any symptoms indicating the presence of cancer must be taken seriously without fear and to be attended by the professional doctors having sufficient knowledge of oncology.

The objective of this book is to make people aware of cancer. In this book the special focus is on breast cancer as the writer has observed the patient of breast cancer for 3 years and studied the disease and its consequences. In India breast cancer is spreading very fast and even young females are falling prey to this disease. In urban areas awareness of cancer is more as compared to the rural areas in the country. In rural areas the facility to detect the disease is not available and the doctors are not properly equipped or trained to handle the disease, they are not able to carry out any awareness program. The DNA dated 31st October 2015 Mumbai addition has written an article on the disease claiming that the cases are on rise, and in fact it is considered to be one of the most common cancers in women according to WHO (World Health Organization). According to the doctors rise in breast cancer cases is because of late marriages, no breast feeding, late motherhood, unhealthy diet pattern coupled with sedentary lifestyle stress and possible history of cancer. Some doctors believe that obesity in females is also one of the cause, what causes cancer is still a point of debate because all the above risk factors are mostly associated with women living in urban areas, so that we can say cancer is seen more in urban areas and cities than in rural areas because rural women are not obese, they eat simple food, get married earlier, but they still catch the disease.

In the year 2015 about 1,55,000 women were suffering from this disease and one in five women may die. As the women ages the risk of cancer also increases. Most of the women above 40 years of age are under the shadow of crab. It chases them and is also known as silent killer. It catches the person unaware, the most common symptoms of the disease are a painless lump in the right or left breast, or a lump in the armpit, neck, tummy, a discharge from the nipple. Sometimes in certain advanced cases that is when the cancer starts spreading to the other parts of bodies pain in the bones, back, loss of vision, appetite occurs. The disease has a tendency to spread to bones, brain, liver and lungs. This is called as metastasis of cancer.

The other risk factors for breast cancer are people have BRCA mutation positive. Women above the age of 40 who are reaching the end of

menopauses should not gain weight and discourage the treatment related to hormone replacement therapy or oral contraceptives, as the hormone replacement therapy contains high estrogen and should not be given. The two hormones estrogen and progesterone are related to menstruation cycle in women which plays an important role in cancer and its treatment.

The awareness of cancer in women should begin at the age of 18, in case the family has a history of cancer and the clinical examination should start by the age of 25.

The important point here is every women above the age of 25 must be clinically examined once in a year by trained doctors, paramedical staff or nurses at the urban or rural clinics.

Breast cancer is of different types; one of the aggressive type of breast cancer is called as triple negative or basal cells, it is common in younger females. Apart from surgery, radiation and chemotherapy, such patients don't have the options of hormonal therapy and other targeted agents.

Cancer awareness is important in country like India, where population is about 130 crores, and female population approximately 60 crores. The ratio of doctors and population is very poor. Among the doctors' negligible percentage of doctors take oncology as a specialization, as cancer cannot be tackled by general practitioners who have very little knowledge of oncology and cancer. Treatment of cancer requires three to four types of doctor's viz. onco surgeons, oncologists (who prescribe medicines) and onco radiologist for radiation treatment and diagnosis of cancer. The fourth type of doctor is the pathologist and there is a need for a good physician to monitor the health of the patient on day to day basis.

In metro cities, all these facilities are available but at district, taluka, village level, all these facilities are not available. Indian rural population are not much aware of these disease's they're illiterate, consume tobacco, smoke bidi's and live in unhygienic conditions. NGO's have very little hold or knowledge of rural India. Cancer patients are increasing but correspondingly not the doctors, specially the female oncologist or radiologist.

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