

Indian Contribution to Obstetrics & Gynecology

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Dr. M.K. Krishna Menon, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.O.G., F.A.M.S.

Padma Shri Dr. M.K. Krishna Menon an educationist and clinician par excellence was born on 25th January, 1908. His academic brilliance can be judged from the fact that at the age of 30 years, he passed B.A. (1927), M.B.B.S. (1932), D.G.O (1935), M.D. (1938) from Zamorin's

College Calicut, Presidency College & Medical College attached to Madras University.

He was a resident house surgeon at Govt. General Hospital and Women and Children's Hospital, Madras from 1932 to 1936. From here he obtained his post graduate degree. Before obtaining his M.D. in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, he was selected as a Research Scholar & Research Fellow of the Madras University under the famous Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Dr. Sir A.L. Mudaliar (1937–1940).

His love for the country was very well known. He did not hesitate to join the army to work as an Emergency Commissioned Officer in the Indian Medical Service from July 1940 to December 1945. During this period he served in various theatres of wars and was released in December 1945. He was duly conferred the rank of Lieutenant Colonel by the army in 1945.

His academic brilliance and clinical acumen was known to who's who of medical field. He was the most wanted doctor cum teacher. From 1945 to 1957 he worked in various capacities at different medical Colleges and Hospitals. To name few Assistant Professor and then Professor in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Stanley Medical College, Madras, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Andhra Medical College Vizakapatnam, Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Madras Medical College.

He was inveterate scientist and he contributed "Lytic cocktail" therapy for Eclampsia. Though superseded by magnesium sulphate today, this remained the standard of care internationally for a number of years.

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The meritorious student was duly appreciated in the year 1957 with the highest post in his beloved institution. He was appointed as Director and Professor, Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Madras Medical College & Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Women and Children Hospital, Madras. During his 14-year tenure as the director of the Institute, institute earned a name in this country and abroad as a centre of training and research in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Back in 1960, he was convinced that without a separate institute fully equipped and staffed for the purpose for which it was created, very little work could be done. He planned a big multistoried block for this purpose that was completed in September 1973. A student remembers how Dr. Menon often reiterated, “All PGs must live on the premises. You must talk, discuss, see, hear, and dream obstetrics and gynaecology.” By his own example of hard work and constant study he kept aspiring doctors on their toes—night duty or not, all PGs assembled every morning for his morning rounds and clinics, and afternoon case presentations. He retired from this post in the year 1970 and there after he was appointed as Professor Emeritus at the same institute.

After his retirement he took various challenging positions, both Nationally & Internationally. He became member of Expert Committee of the WHO on Maternal and Child Health. He was also a member/chairman of the ICMR sub-committee on Maternal and Child Health, Human Reproduction and Fertility Control. Government of

India appointed him as a committee member on Maternal and Child Health, Fertility Control and Medical Education. He was also committee member of Human Reproduction of the FIGO.

He has numerous scientific publications in national and international Journals. He co-authored along with Dr. Sir A.L. Mudaliar a text book on “Clinical Obstetrics”. The university of foreign countries also recognized his scientific publications and thus in the year 1968 he was appointed as visiting Professor at the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Down State Medical Centre, State University of New York and in 1970 in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Oxford University.

He became President of FOGSI and Vice president of the Asian Federation of OBGYN. In 1963, he was the President of the 12th AICOG which was held at Ahmedabad. He was the founder fellow of National Academy of Medical Sciences.

It was a moment of satisfaction and fulfillment when he was awarded Fellowship of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in the year 1962 and Padma Shri, The President Award in the year 1973. In 1987, he was also awarded Hon. Fellowship of the Asia & Oceania Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Leaving a big vacuum in the field of clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Padma Shri Dr. M.K. Krishna Menon passed away at the age of 80 years in the year 1988.