

*Editorial*

## In Memoriam: Virendra Singh Mathur, MD

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**D**r Virendra Singh Mathur was known as a true pioneer in cardiovascular education and teaching. He died November 21, 2024, at the age of 89.

Born on March 7, 1935, in Kanpur, India, Virendra Mathur received his medical degree from King George's Medical College in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India, in 1956. He moved to the United States on January 7, 1962, to train in cardiology at Harvard University and Tufts University, both in the Boston, Massachusetts, area. After marrying Nalini Mathur, he returned in 1967 to New Delhi for work until he came back to the United States in 1970 to join Baylor College of Medicine and practice at its associated US Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in Houston, Texas.

Dr Mathur's career advanced when he was asked by Dr Robert Hall, Dr Efrain Garcia, and Dr Carlos DeCastro to join them in forming the prestigious cardiology practice at The Texas Heart Institute in Houston, then known as Hall-Garcia Cardiology Associates, where he remained until his retirement in 2020. There, he taught cardiology fellows at the Clayton Cath Lab at St Luke's Episcopal Hospital while training other young doctors to become cardiologists. He had the honor of working side by side with elite cardiovascular surgeon Dr Denton A. Cooley throughout his career at The Texas Heart Institute.

Dr Mathur soon became famous for his "no bubble" method, used along with the Sones technique of cardiac catheterization, for which he is still talked about today in the cardiology fellowship program. He twice received The Texas Heart Institute's Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr Mathur had many prominent patients from India, such as seventh President of India Zail Singh and 10th President Dr K. R. Narayanan; prime ministers P. V. Narasimha Rao and Charan Singh; and several governors, chief ministers, supreme court judges, and other dignitaries as well as chairs and chief executive officers of corporations.

Dr Mathur always stressed the importance of indications for coronary artery bypass grafting over medical therapy. He was the lead author on the report of the landmark coronary artery bypass grafting study in veterans in 1975.

He was coauthor of more than 170 publications over his career. His research included studies and analyses of published data to prove that even after complete blockage of a coronary artery, heart muscle could be partly saved if the blood supply could be restored quickly by reopening the blocked artery. This research was truly groundbreaking.



*Virendra Singh Mathur, MD*

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Dr Mathur received more than 25 awards in recognition of his professional service, including the Hind Ratan (“Jewel of India”), a top civilian award in India for nonresident Indians who have made outstanding contributions to society. He was 1 of the first 11 recipients of this award when it was initiated in 1989.

He was particularly active in the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin and the India Culture Center of Houston. Also, he was instrumental in the inception of India House Houston, where he ran a charity clinic every Saturday for years. For those interested in making a donation, India House Houston is located at 8888 W Bellfort Ave, Houston, TX 77031, (713) 929-1900, [info@indiahouseinc.org](mailto:info@indiahouseinc.org).

Dr Mathur is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Nalini; son Gaurav Mathur, now living in Washington, DC; son-in-law Gaurav Aurora; and 2 grandsons, Taran and Raunak. He also leaves behind many nieces and nephews, including in the United States (Apurva and Rashmi of Dallas, Texas, and Vandana and Shankar of Boston), and many grandnieces and grandnephews.

Dr Mathur was responsible not only for saving lives but was also, in July 1982, the driving force behind my

being accepted into Hall-Garcia Cardiology Associates, where I remain today (having subsequently joined Baylor College of Medicine in 2015). We will miss his kindness, thoughtfulness, and affability. He will remain in our prayers.

## Article Information

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