

Proceedings of the Indo–UK Symposium on Biomaterials

Foreword

To use a modern definition, a biomaterial is a substance “other than a drug, or combination of substances, synthetic or natural in origin, which can be used for any period of time as a whole or as part of a system which treats, augments or replaces any tissue, organ or function of the body”. Notwithstanding the exactness of definition, the fact remains that biomaterials owe their birth to the technology of medical devices which cast their mantle on hospital services no more than three or four decades ago. Still in its infancy, biomaterials science is eclectic and draws its sustenance from disciplines as different from each other as polymer chemistry, metallurgy and pathology. Given its interest in biomaterials, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology opened the Raman Centenary year appropriately by organising an Indo–UK Symposium on Biomaterials in Trivandrum on 5–6 January 1988. Inaugurated by Dr Raja Ramanna, the occasion attracted speakers from both countries and over sixty young scientists from Indian universities.

The papers appearing in this issue of the Bulletin were selected from among those which were presented at the Symposium. They reflect the many-sidedness of biomaterials in so far as they seek to modify polymers for medical applications, find substitutes for bone, direct drug delivery, promote cell growth on microcarriers and replace small arteries. We hope the presentations will stimulate greater interest in the fascinating world of biomaterials.

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