

Recent Advances in Medicine

Tuesdays, October 19 to December 7, 2021, 10am to noon

ZOOM Session

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Coordinator and Presenter: Dr Philip Wood M.D.

Course Overview: This course will focus on recent advances in medical research and knowledge and how their applications in diagnostics and therapeutics are transforming healthcare.

October 19: Sleeping on the Job - Anesthesia has advanced unbelievably in the last few decades. The use of new molecules with fewer side effects and better monitoring equipment have advanced anesthetics to open the door to more and more complex surgery while diminishing the risks at the same time.

October 26: The Magic Bullet: Antibiotics - We take antibiotics for granted these days, and yet they have only been available to the medical profession for only some 70 years. The challenge today is to combat the increasing resistance of bacteria to present drugs. We will also talk about our own 'biome' of bacteria that are essential to our individual well being and how this is affected by antibiotics and pollution.

November 2: The Building Blocks of Repair: Stem Cells - There is an enormous body of research into stem cells today, because they hold the promise of being able to replace any other cell in our body that may be malfunctioning or even dead. We will discuss where stem cells can be found and how they are being used.

November 9: In the Looking Glass: Medical Imaging - New imaging technologies have enabled us to explore the human body more thoroughly and to use minimally invasive techniques in some surgical procedures that used to involve large incisions, more post-operative pain, and longer recoveries. We will examine some x-rays as well as amazing new images and techniques.

November 16: Defencing the Ramparts: Vaccines - Looking at the history of vaccines and infectious disease, we will see that there has always been some resistance to immunizations along with some amazing success stories. We will look at 'anti-vaxxers' motivations and theories around the world today and analyse the recent speed of development of vaccines.

November 23: Encouraging the Troops: The Battle for Cancer - The immunological treatment of cancer promises a type of therapy that could avoid all the major side effects of present-day anti-cancer treatments. Is this how the body might be conquering cancers we never knew we had? What are the present uses of this therapy, and when might it be so effective as to become a front line treatment?

November 30: The Broad Street Pump: Epidemics and Pandemics - The Covid 19 pandemic caught us unaware and unprepared. How have epidemics and pandemics been resolved in the

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past? Should we be looking for possible new sources of an epidemic? How does contact tracing work, and what value is there in tracing the minor genetic variations of viruses? What have we learned, and how can we prepare for a possible next pandemic?

December 7: Nutrition for the Third Age - Nutrition has been neglected in medical education, yet it is the main factor that assures good health. We will look at some amazing research on nutrition and the elderly and will look for pointers that will help each one of us improve our life styles.

Dr. Philip Wood trained as a General Surgeon in the U.K. and together with his wife, Toronto trained Dr Nancy Houser, has spent most of his career in a large hospital in the North East Democratic Republic of Congo. He was the Senior Surgeon for much of the time as well as having other administrative and teaching roles.

Philip and Nancy retired from full-time service in 2012 but have been going back to encourage those they have trained for 3 months a year since then. Philip has previously presented two lecture series for Learning Unlimited: “Great Rivers and their Resources” in Winter 2018 and “The Silk Road and Central Asia” in Fall 2018.

Dr. Wood is the author of “In Praise of Simplicity”, a memoir of Christian service in war and peace in central Africa.