

Russel J. Reiter and Jo Robinson:

MELATONIN

Your Body's Natural Wonder Drug

New York: Bantam Books; 1995.

ISBN 0-553-10017-3. 38 Figures, 290 pages.

About the authors: Russel J. Reiter, Ph.D., is a professor of neuroendocrinology at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Pineal Research*, Associate Editor of *Neuroendocrinology Letters* and a member of advisory boards of over twenty other medical journals. He is one of the pioneers and the godfather of melatonin research, greatly appreciated and respected over the world for his contributions. He is the leading international authority on the actions of melatonin and on pineal research. Jo Robinson is a medical writer from Portland, Oregon. She has collaborated on seven nonfiction books, including the best-selling *Getting the Love You Want* by Harville Hendrix.

This is a fascinating story written both for professionals and for laymen alike. A story of a scientific vision and endurance of unbridled enthusiasm so typical for these authors and so very much needed in the basic approach toward research and science in both theoretical and clinical fields. As David E. Blask, Ph.D., M.D., wrote in his foreword to this book, it is also the story of how many years of basic research are beginning to pay off, and how the results are finding their way from the researcher's bench to the patient's bedside. This story, not very much older than forty and some years, gives every researcher and scientist as well as every intelligent and curious reader a great deal of hope and optimism.

The book starts with a historical review of research on the pineal gland and discoveries of melatonin, describes melatonin's protective abilities for human health, pointing out hidden environmental hazards and how common medications can jeopardize an individual's health by diminishing the natural supply of melatonin. The authors guide the reader from the antioxidant attributes of melatonin, through potential boosting of the immune system, protection of the heart, sleep aid, connections with the reproductive system, mood and mind to the vision of protecting from cancer and aging. The book concentrates on the possibilities for improving the quality of life up to old age.

In this carefully, cautiously written book, Russel Reiter warns against expectations of a "cure-all" remedy, stressing melatonin's potentials to enhance human health and well-being. Not a panacea, but a preventive and holistic approach to the use of melatonin are stressed. This approach is very much in line with this *Journal*, the *Neuroendocrinology Letters*. The authors also provide a complete guide to melatonin supplements, including safe and effective doses, the best kind to buy, and when and how to take them.

Both References and the Index are excellent and comprehensive and give to the reader additional, invaluable information. You read the book as though it is fiction. As for myself, I could not stop before reaching the last page. This book is highly recommended reading both as a source of knowledge and inspiration but also for colleagues most specialized in the fields of Neuroendocrinology and Psychoneuroimmunology.

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