

Contents

Preface	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
Prologue	xiii
1. The Beginning	1
2. Chemistry of DNA	9
3. DNA Is the Genetic Material	17
4. DNA in Three Dimensions: The Double-Helix	27
5. Duplicating DNA	35
6. From Genes to Enzymes	45
7. Cracking the Genetic Code	53
8. DNA Sequencing and PCR	61
9. Jumping Genes	71
10. Genetic Engineering	81
11. The Human Genome	95
12. Human Microbiome: We Are Not Alone	105
13. Contribution of Microbes to the Health of Humans, Animals, and Plants	115

14. Origin of Nucleic Acids and the First Cells	129
15. Evolution: From Darwin to the Hologenome Concept	139
16. DNA and Cancer	155
17. DNA, Aging, and Death	167
Appendix: Nobel Prizes Awarded for Nucleic Acid Research	179
Glossary of Scientific Terms	181
Selected Bibliography	189
Index	193