



Rajendra Damle obtained his PhD degree (1992) in Applied Biology at the Cancer Research Institute, Parel, Mumbai. For his doctoral thesis Rajendra studied the functional aspects and contributions of T lymphocytes in Hodgkin's disease. After a brief stint as Research Associate at the Department of Biotechnology, University of Pune, in August 1992 he joined NCCS (then known as National Facility for Animal Tissue and Cell culture, NFATCC) in Pune as a Scientist where he focused his academic interests on Neuroimmunological aspects of Neuroblastoma, an aggressive paediatric malignancy.

In 1995 Rajendra moved to the laboratory of Experimental Immunology headed by Prof. Nicholas Chiorazzi at the North-Shore LIJ Research Institute, in Manhasset in NY, USA, where he was introduced to and started working on Chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), the most common form of blood cancer in the western world. In a seminal paper published in 1999, Rajendra and his colleagues proposed two novel prognostic markers that helped delineate for the first time, CLL cases into two distinct clinical subgroups. These highly-cited findings also promoted the understanding of the pathophysiology of the disease better and laid the ground work for several subsequent studies in their group and worldwide.

Rajendra has authored over thirty peer-reviewed publications reporting original research findings and three review articles. In addition, he has authored one book chapter and is co-inventor on three US patents. Over the years, Rajendra has been invited to deliver guest lectures at various European countries, serves on several institutional committees and is an invited reviewer for top-level hematological journals. Currently he heads the Laboratory of Lymphocyte activation, CLL Research and Treatment program at the Feinstein Institute for Medical research, Manhasset, NY and is jointly appointed as Assistant Professor at Hofstra North Shore-LIJ School of Medicine at Hempstead, NY. His research interests continue to be purely translational in nature. His group focuses research efforts towards identifying cellular and molecular cues and targets in CLL and other related malignancies.