



Dear colleagues,

A few weeks ago, Prof. Dr. Beat von Albertini passed away in Lausanne, Switzerland. He was 73 years-old. We would like to address Dr von Albertini's pioneering contribution to the current knowledge of modern haemodialysis.

Dr von Albertini was a Swiss nephrologist born in Zurich who graduated as a medical doctor at the Faculty of Medicine of his city.

He subsequently worked in the USA, initially as a resident in New York City, then at Stanford University where he reached the position of associate professor in nephrology, and finally in Washington D.C. In the seventies, with some colleagues from the George Washington University Medical Centre, he was the first to raise the concept of high efficiency dialysis, with the ultimate challenge to reduce dialysis duration to less than 3 hours, even 2 hours, three times-a-week. This involved the prescription of very high blood and dialysate flows, the use of larger needles, of dialyzers, or even double dialyzers with greater surface area and permeability, and the development of technologies to ensure volumetric control of the dialysate. This resulted in very high diffusive and convective transfer of uraemic toxins, ultimately permitting drastic reductions in treatment time over conventional dialysis, without sacrificing treatment adequacy.

When he returned in Switzerland in 1996, Prof. von Albertini treated all his dialysis patients in this way at the Clinic Cecil in Lausanne, strongly challenging the standard of dialysis care at that time, not only in Lausanne but also in Switzerland and Europe. His belief was that the patients should enjoy most of their time off dialysis. Nowadays, in modern dialysis, high blood and dialysate flows have become standard practice. In addition to his outstanding skills in dialysis science, the man Beat von Albertini was a special figure with a very strong personality. He could not attend a meeting without challenging the speakers with critical and always knowledgeable comments. He was loved by his patients and supported them constantly when they were in difficulty. He had passion, generosity, and vision. However, his personality was further magnified when he discussed culture, art, history and finance issues with an exceptional expertise. His overall impressive knowledge and his way of interacting with colleagues, friends and persons from all over the world made him a unique figure who will leave unforgettable memories in the mind of several generations of nephrologists.

Beat, we will miss you a lot.

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