

In Memoriam

Jacques Genest Sr 1919–2018

Dr Jacques Genest Sr, one of the pioneers of the hypertension research field, passed away peacefully at the age of 98 years in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, on January 5, 2018. Dr Genest is survived by his wife Estelle, his children Paul, Suzanne, Jacques Jr, Marie, and Hélène, as well as 12 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

Jacques Genest Sr was born in Montreal on May 29, 1919. He studied medicine at the Université de Montréal before going on to specialize in internal medicine, endocrinology, and nephrology at Harvard Medical School, Johns Hopkins Hospital, and The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research.

Jacques Genest was one of the giants of hypertension research of the 20th century. He was also a major force in medicine, science, and education in Quebec and Canada throughout his career. His contributions to the mechanisms of hypertension were major, starting with his article in *Science* on the role of aldosterone in hypertension in 1956,¹ the discovery of the action of angiotensin II to stimulate aldosterone secretion by the adrenal,^{2,3} and the role of renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system in human and experimental hypertension in the 1960s and 1970s.^{4,5} In the 1980s, his group demonstrated potential important roles of natriuretic peptides, discovered by Adolfo De Bold in part while visiting Genest's group's laboratories.⁶ He authored or coauthored >700 manuscripts and 4 books, among them 2 treatises on hypertension of which he was the editor in 1976 and 1984, which were the last word in the field at the time.

Beyond his contribution to hypertension, he contributed to the development of clinical research in Quebec and Canada. He was the founder in 1967 and Director until he retired in 1984 of the Clinical Research Institute of Montreal (now called IRCM from the abbreviation of the name of the institute in French), which grew enormously from 1972 to the present and is a major biomedical research institution in Montreal. He was a founder of the Conseil de Recherche en Santé du Québec (the medical research council of Quebec today called the FRQS), and one of the founders in 1963 of

the Medical Research Council of Canada (MRCC), today the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. He directed the MRCC Multidisciplinary Research Group on Hypertension at IRCM from 1972 to 1984. He also created the Canadian Society of Clinical Investigation, the first department of biomedical research based in a francophone hospital in Quebec in 1952, as well as the Club de recherches cliniques du Québec (Quebec clinical research society).

He was Chair of the High Blood Pressure Research Council of the American Heart Association (today Council on Hypertension of AHA) in 1976 to 1978. The Council recognized his scientific contributions with the Stouffer Award

(predecessor of the Excellence Award in Hypertension of the AHA) in 1968, and the designation as Distinguished Scientist of AHA in 2004. He received many doctorates honoris causa, the Order of Canada and the Order of Quebec, and many other scientific awards and prizes, including the Gairdner International Award, the Izaak Walton Killam Award, and the Flavelle Medal presented by the Royal Society of Canada. He was also inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

His ebullient personality, his energy, his smile, and his friendliness attracted colleagues and students. His disciples are legion, coming from and residing today in all parts of the world, where many are leaders in the hypertension field or related scientific and biomedical areas in their own right. He was a

mentor to many young scientists who he welcomed warmly at the institute. The Christmas parties at his and Estelle's home were wonderfully welcoming for his postdoctoral fellows from around the world.

As his postdoctoral fellow (at IRCM) and PhD student (at McGill University), and later successor as Director of the MRCC Group on Hypertension at IRCM, I knew him for 40 years. I can say that throughout those years, his main concerns apart from his family were the advance of knowledge on hypertension and cardiovascular disease, the healthcare system, and the education of future scientists to which he contributed immensely.



Dr Jacques Genest Sr, CC, MD, MACP, FRCPC

It will be difficult for those of us who knew him well to forget his strong voice, his warm look, his friendly and contagious smile, and his extraordinary personality and contributions. He lived a long life, a life well lived, and, like few, he made the world a better place.

Disclosures

None.

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