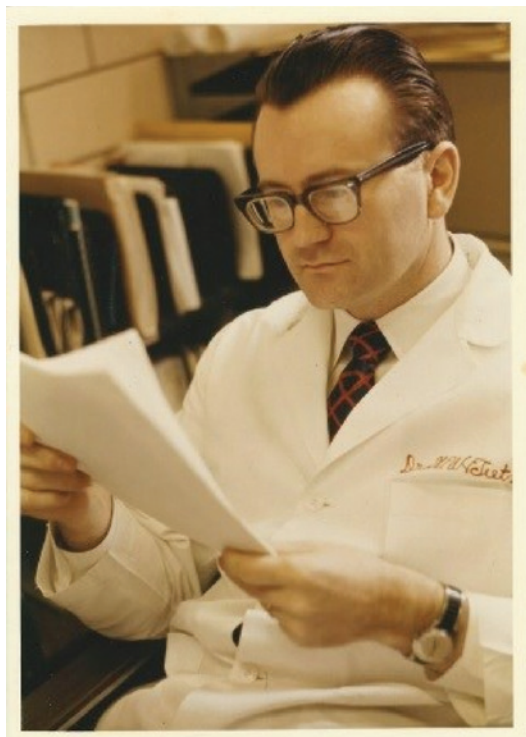


## Obituary

Mario Plebani and Giuseppe Lippi

# Norbert Tietz, 13th November 1926–23rd May 2018

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On May 23rd of this year, Norbert Tietz, an outstanding figure in the field of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine died, in Georgia, at the age of 91. Dr. Tietz was born in Germany and received the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences from the Technical University in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1950. From 1951 to 1954 he was a research fellow at the University of Munich, where he published many studies on lipid metabolism. In 1954 Dr. Tietz immigrated to the United States, where he worked as research fellow at Rockford Memorial Hospital, Rockford, IL, USA, in collaboration with Dr. Samuel Natelson, who kindled his interest in the growing science of clinical chemistry. At the time, no one understood better than Norbert Tietz that clinical chemistry was undergoing a paradigm shift driven by some important scientists like Otto Folin, Donald Van Slyke and Michael Somogyi. After a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago (1955–1956) and a tenure as head of the clinical chemistry laboratories at Reid Memorial Hospital in Richmond, IN, USA, Dr. Tietz joined Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center

in Chicago as Director of Clinical Chemistry, with a faculty appointment at the Chicago Medical School, a position that he held for 17 years. During his interaction with clinicians, he emphasized the great dependence of clinics on laboratory test results, as well as the necessity to publish a book aimed at connecting modern automated technology and pathophysiology, as well as bridging medical and laboratory professionals. Dr. Tietz was involved in education throughout his career. He commenced the first MS degree program in Clinical Chemistry in the United States in the late 1960s. This program was then broadened into one of the first ever PhD programs in the field of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine in the country.

Dr. Tietz's educational efforts have been at the forefront of developments within Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine. In 1967 he organized the first seminar for applied gas chromatography, and in 1972 he organized and directed the first international conference on the emerging field of clinical enzymology in the United States. This conference was aimed at increasing standardization in enzyme assessment worldwide. The success of this seminar paved the way for a broad expansion into more International Symposia on Clinical Enzymology for years afterwards, which he also chaired and organized.

Dr. Tietz is best known for editing the book "*Fundamentals of Clinical Chemistry*", which has sold in the thousands worldwide, the first edition of which was published nearly 50 years ago. The 8th edition of this textbook is scheduled to appear later this year and remains a primary source of information supporting students and educators in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine. This book was forerunner in integrating laboratory medicine with basic sciences and pathophysiology, and has been translated into many languages around the world. Dr. Tietz also edited the "*Textbook of Clinical Chemistry*", which links laboratory medicine with clinical management, a target which can be accomplished by connecting pathophysiology with test results. Dr. Tietz played a prominent role in many scientific societies including the American Association for Clinical Chemistry and the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry, and his perseverance in educating young generations of laboratory medicine professionals is now acknowledged worldwide. As one of the fathers of modern clinical chemistry and laboratory

medicine, he contributed greatly to the progress of this profession, and also encouraged laboratory medicine professionals to translate the progress in our field into clinical practice. His scientific and educational accomplishments would suffice to ensure Dr. Norbert Tietz an enduring legacy in the field of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine.

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