



Obituary

Obituary for Dr. Bernardo Ochoa (1926–2016)



It is with deep regret that the Iberoamerican Society of Pediatric Urology (Sociedad Iberoamericana de Urología Pediátrica) announces the passing of its first President, Dr. Bernardo Ochoa, on 01 January 2017. Those who had the opportunity to meet him remember him as a man with clear and precise concepts in pediatric urology, a man who was very proud of his eloquent Spanish, and a man who always put his patients' interests first.

Dr. Bernardo Ochoa, a Colombian pediatric surgeon and urologist, was born on 14 September 1926 in a town near Medellín, Colombia. His mother was a hard-working woman who left the legacy of an optimal education to her children. Dr. Ochoa completed his medical school in 1953 at the Universidad de Antioquia in Medellín, Colombia. In 1954, he married Alina Gautier, a Professor of Biochemistry from the same university. They had two children.

In 1957, he received a scholarship from W. K. Kellogg Foundation and was sent to the United States to work as a fellow in the Department of Surgery at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor). In 1959, he moved to Boston to continue his training at Boston Children's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital (Department of Surgery of Harvard University) working under the mentorship of professors and surgeons Drs. Robert E. Gross and W. Hardy Hendren.

In 1960, Dr. Ochoa returned to Colombia to work for the Department of Surgery at the San Vicente de Paúl University Hospital. Shortly after his return from abroad, he initiated the first pediatric surgery fellowship program in Colombia along with Drs. Benjamin Mejía and Hernán Pérez. Because of his training in

Boston, he incorporated pediatric urology into the fellowship program. In 1965, he was appointed as Head of the Surgery Department, and in 1975 and 1977 he was appointed as Vice-Dean and Dean, respectively, of the Medical School of the Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia. Shortly after finishing his work as Dean, he returned to the Pediatric Surgery Unit, devoting himself exclusively to the practice and teaching of pediatric urology. In 1969 and 1970, he had the opportunity to visit several important pediatric centers in Europe: Great Ormond Street Hospital, in London, UK; Alder Hay Children's Hospital, in Liverpool, UK; Sheffield Children's Hospital, in Sheffield, UK; Karolinska Institutet, in Stockholm, Sweden; Kinderchirurgische Klinik, in Bremen, Germany; and Gaslini Clinic in Genova, Italy.

During his long academic life, he was accepted as a member of several national and international scientific societies, including the: American College of Surgeons, American Academy of Pediatrics (Surgery Section), American Pediatric Surgical Association (APSA), and British Association of Paediatric Surgeons. Furthermore, he was one of the founders and first President of the Iberoamerican Society of Pediatric Urology (Sociedad Iberoamericana de Urología Pediátrica, SIUP) in 1994. Among his papers and research, his discovery of the urofacial syndrome or Ochoa's syndrome helped him gain international recognition. Urofacial syndrome is a bladder dysfunction associated with a disorder in the muscles responsible for facial expression, which, although rare, has been found all around the world, and if unrecognized in childhood may lead to upper urinary tract deterioration and renal failure.

The University of Antioquia honored him with the title of Professor Emeritus and the Francisco Antonio Zea Medal, University Merit Order. He received the "Visiting Scientist" diploma from the University of Minnesota. He was awarded the distinction of Honorary Member by the American Pediatric Surgical Association as well as the Colombian Society of Pediatric Surgery (CSPS). He was the international guest speaker of the Section of Urology

at the American Academy of Pediatrics Annual Meeting in 1992 in New Orleans. He participated in countless meetings of the specialty worldwide and published national and international articles in Spanish and English.

Don Bernardo, what we used to call him, was a teacher, a leader, an exemplary man and a great role model for many pediatric surgeons and pediatric urologists in Ibero-America.

Further reading

"Cirugía y Urología Pediátrica en Colombia, pasado, presente y futuro y los cambios curriculares que les dieron vida". Author: Bernardo Ochoa Arismendy. Editorial de la Universidad de Antioquia. Facultad de Medicina.

"En memoria del Profesor Bernardo Ochoa A.: Breve Semblanza". Author: Abraham Chams Anturi.

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