
LEGENDS IN UROLOGY

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My urology career has been a 50-year adventure, which I am honored to share with you.

I was born in Lisbon, Portugal, from which mariners in the 15th and 16th centuries sailed to discover the rest of the world and made many important discoveries that allowed them to map the world.

In 1963, after I received my medical degree from the University of Lisbon, I trained in general surgery for 3 years and then three more years to complete my education training in urology under Professor Matos Ferreira, and I also received urology training with two leaders in the field, professors John Blandy and Richard Turner Warwick, in London, England.

A few years later, in 1966, I began my clinical career at the Hospitais Civis de Lisboa.

All my clinical career took place in the Hospitais Civis de Lisboa since 1966. A decade later, in 1977, I became an Assistant Professor of Urology, at the University of Lisbon.

In 1978, I attended a meeting of the Genitourinary Group of the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) in Erice, Sicily that changed my career course. Many EORTC members, notably Louis Denis, Philip Smith, Fritz Schroeder, and Don Newling, encouraged me to bring other Portuguese urologists and related specialists to join this international group.

A few years later, in 1984, I and fellow urologists, and oncologists, pathologists, radiation oncologists, endocrinologists, nuclear medicine specialists, and immunologists from Portugal formed the Portuguese Genitourinary Group of the EORTC. We then had greater access to international clinical trials, and it allowed us to more readily share knowledge with leading figures in urology throughout the world.

A year after we formed this group, we organized a training course for urologic oncology of the European School of Oncology (ESO) in Sesimbra, Portugal, which was chaired by Louis Denis, from Antwerp, Belgium.

In 1986, I was appointed chairman of the Quality of Life Committee of in the Genitourinary Group of the EORTC.

Along with Neil Aaronson of the Cancer Institute of the Netherlands, we developed a quality-of-life questionnaire that was used by patients who were newly diagnosed with prostate cancer and who participated in the clinical trial of orchiectomy versus goserelin plus flutamide. The results of this aspect of the study were later published in the *European Journal of Cancer*.¹

In 1994, with the support of some members of the EORTC GU-Group (Louis Denis, Philip Smith and Richard Sylvester), we started the first Phase III protocol for the use of intermittent treatment in prostate cancer compared with continuous treatment, and were the first to publish the results.^{2,3}

Over the past 30 years, the Portuguese Genitourinary Group of the EORTC has published 300 articles related to uro-oncology, and I have made many presentations at international conferences. Our group has also published 13 books and has held more than 60 educational programs as well as annual workshops and postgraduate training courses.

In 1997, the group, together with the Portuguese National Health Service, launched a national screening program for the early detection of prostate cancer.

The group continues to conduct important research. For example, the Characterization of Pharmacogenomics Profile Carcinoma of Hormone-resistant Prostate, with Professor Rui Medeiros, and Evaluation of the Immune Response Induced Antitumoral to Therapy with BCG in Superficial Bladder Tumors Quantification by RT-PCR Real-time Expression of Several Genes Probably Involved, with Professor Helder Trindade.

All this scientific activity contributed to the development of urological oncology, with the participation, commitment and help of many colleagues, namely Professors Louis Denis, Philip Smith and Edson Pontes. This has been a reference and an example for Portuguese Urology and Professor Ferran Algaba has been the pillar of the example of excellence in the development of pathology.

The Portuguese Genitourinary Group of the EORTC has just published the first Portuguese textbook on malignant tumors of the urinary tract, with more than a hundred Portuguese and international authors.

In addition to my involvement with the EORTC, from 1998 until my retirement in 2007, I held the position of Director of the Department of Urology at Desterro Hospital in Lisbon, Portugal. In 2003 we were the first public hospital in the country to provide brachytherapy for prostate cancer, and we also created a uro-oncology outpatient department where patients could receive chemotherapy.

Of course I also want to mention that this whole journey and maybe all this success would not have been possible without the support of my Portuguese colleagues that have always supported the work we have done for the recognition of the Portuguese urology.

I am proud that my son Fernando is also a urologist and I am thankful for his support, and I am especially grateful to my wife Aida, for her unwavering support throughout my career.

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