

A tribute to Arthur Cohen's memory

Le nostre storie: vite di nefrologi

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Arthur H Cohen (15-05-1942; 17-05-2022) graduated from College in Brooklyn (New York) in 1963 and completed his medical studies and his internship in Medicine at SUNY University in Buffalo (NY). He undertook his medical specialty in Anatomic Pathology at Mt. Sinai in NY and completed his residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in 1972, where he remained for about 20 years.

Then he moved to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for another 20 years, where he became Professor of Pathology at UCLA School of Medicine and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and finally he became Director of the Institute of Pathology.

Arthur Cohen created a renal pathology service at Harbour-UCLA Medical Center (then Harbour General Hospital) in the early '70s, and was one of the first physicians in the United States to provide a diagnosis of renal disease based on the integration of light microscopy, immunofluorescence microscopy, and ultrastructural analysis.

His approach involved not only the integration of information from the 3 microscopic techniques for examining the renal biopsy, but also the importance of the patient's medical history as a guide in the evaluation and conclusions of the examination.

Dr. Cohen was a highly respected pathologist who attracted kidney biopsy consultations from around the world. He played an important role in the creation of the Renal Pathology Club, which later became the Renal Pathology Society (RPS).

He was a founding member and president of the RPS and received the "RPS Jacob Churg" award and the "Gift of Life award from the National Kidney Foundation". As an enlightened and deeply committed scholar, Arthur has promoted kidney disease education around the world, serving on the Post-Graduate Education Committee of the American Society of Nephrology and the Global Outreach program of the International Society of Nephrology.

He was a valued speaker and also instructed many pathologists and nephrologists who attended his Institute as visitors from both nearby places in the United States and from all corners of the world. As a leader in kidney disease, Arthur has made significant scientific contributions in the most important international journals since the mid-70s.

His work with Wayne Border in the early 80s established the mechanism of in situ immunocomplex formation, through the administration of exogenous cationic antigens such as bovine serum albumin with charge alteration as a mechanism for the development of membranous nephropathy. In addition, together they identified TGF-beta over the years as an important cytokine in the evolution of renal fibrosis and sclerosis in chronic transplant rejection.

His enthusiasm, friendliness, and curiosity have made him an excellent collaborator with many pathologists and nephrologists.

Personally, I always remember his friendliness in communicating the results of kidney biopsies to clinicians who were anxiously waiting for his verdict and I still remember how he made them participate by asking what outcome they expected on the basis of the clinical presentation, with his recurring phrase “What you guess?” with a sardonic smile of the one who is ready to amaze but also to confirm the intuition of a doctor who had entrusted the fate of his patient with his skills.

Dr. Cohen was also, and above all, the father of three daughters, Gail, Marjorie, and Cheryl, and had a loving and lively wife (Susan). He loved music and was a funny person, he had a great gift which was that of listening, besides being a really kind and caring person.

Arthur’s family wishes all donations in his name to be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, the National Kidney Foundation, or to any other place that makes you think of Arthur.

With affection and deep respect for our friend, colleague, and mentor, on behalf of the nephrology community.



Figura 1: Domenico Santoro e Arthur H Cohen