

# Medicine: Ways of Life Medicina: Modos de Vida

26 de Janeiro > 20 de Maio de 2009

12 de Março, 18h00 | Auditório 3



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## THE DISCOVERY OF HL-A OR WOMEN IN MY LIFE IN SCIENCE

*Jon van Rood, Leiden, Netherlands*

*Jon Van Rood* received his MD (1950) and PhD (1962) degrees from Leiden University. After a brief period at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York, he worked as a family practitioner in a Dutch village, before returning to Leiden University to train internal medicine. As a junior resident, he was then appointed to the newly created Blood Bank, where produced some of the seminal observations on the HLA system. After a sabbatical year in New York, where he was exposed to basic immunology and kidney and bone marrow transplantation, he organized the famous Second International Workshop on Histocompatibility, in Leiden, where through his insight, the human Major Histocompatibility Complex was first understood. He later also demonstrated that the HLA-D antigens, revealed by mixed leukocyte reactions, could as well be detected by antibodies.

Following systematic HLA typing of donors and recipients of kidney allografts, and multicentric clinical research on the survival of transplanted kidneys, Jon Van Rood suggested an exchange program for cadaveric donor kidneys in Europe, on the basis of typing, which represented the start of the Eurotransplant consortium. Van Rood has also been the driving force in the launching of bone marrow transplantation in many clinical settings (and the Eurodonor consortium), in the foundation of the Dutch Society for Immunology (1964), the European Group for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (1974),

and the European Federation for Immunogenetics (1985).

Jon Van Rood has retired from the chairmanship of the Leiden University Department of Immunohematology and Blood Transfusion in 1991, but continues active research in areas of his interest, namely on the tolerance to "noninherited maternal HLAs". He has educated more than 70 PhDs, published over 450 articles, and was awarded numerous prizes, such as the Wolf Prize (1978), and the Medawar Award of the Transplantation Society (1996). He is a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a foreign associate of the US National Academy of Sciences. A true pioneer in the field of human transplantation, Jon Van Rood has combined high-quality scientific laboratory research with practical applications to health care.