

## Guest Editorials

### A Tribute to Dr. Eliova Zukerman

A great neurologist and headache specialist has left us recently. Dr. Eliova Zukerman passed away on June 3, 2016 in São Paulo, Brazil. It is difficult writing about him at this very moment, as the two of us knew him well and loved him. If you met him just once, no words would be needed to describe his special attributes, other than saying he was a great man. For those who never knew him, no words attempting to define him can do him justice.

He was a man of many talents, an exponent of all paths of life, and yet a rare example of balance between all the areas of life he embraced. His teachings have reached many students, colleagues, patients, family members, and friends, so many and so deep that we cannot begin to recount them.

Eliova was born on April 19, 1923 in Mogilev Podolsky, in the Ukraine, son of Ida and Boris Zukerman. The family moved to Santos, Brazil when he was 6 months old, where he lived until starting medical school at Escola Paulista de Medicina, São Paulo, getting his medical degree in 1953. He became a naturalized Brazilian citizen in 1952.

He practiced neurology in the pre-residency training, pre-neuroimaging era, when clinical history and neurological examination were the only essential tools available for diagnosis. One of his special skills was his unique way of taking a patient's history, precise yet intuitive and instructive. He had all the patience necessary to be accurate and put the patient at ease. He used to teach his students to listen carefully to what patients have to tell about all of their problems, so that an accurate diagnosis could be made.

He was a discreet and gentle giant, wise beyond his years and incredibly skilled in the art of conversation, both medical and social. He remained an astute, innovative clinician, and researcher even



into his 80s, always walking around with an article to learn from and show his colleagues. He could propose a research program in headache or neurology with the insight of an expert chess player and he actually was a chess champion in his youth.

At Escola Paulista de Medicina, today named São Paulo Federal University, he started a headache clinic in 1976. He was one of the founders of the Brazilian Headache Society in 1978, and a key person in its development.

Dr. Zukerman published 68 papers, the first in 1954, the last some weeks before his passing, available online. In 1997, together with Ottar Sjaastad and Juan Pareja, he published a seminal paper on clinical features of first division trigeminal neuralgia. His interest in the trigeminal autonomic cephalgias kept increasing; other publications, including case descriptions (cluster-tic syndrome, EPH-cluster, and others), followed.

He was a mentor of the Brazilian epidemiological study, its papers published between 2008 and 2009. His compulsory retirement from the University at age 70 could not stop him. He devoted all his

efforts to the well known Albert Einstein Hospital in São Paulo, created the Research Institute in 1998, launched post graduate programs in 2001, and the Brain Research Institute in 2003.

He was the quintessential family man, a loving father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and a wonderful friend to so many. His advice and suggestions were cornerstones in the lives of many, but certainly to one of us (MP), being fortunate enough to work closely with him for the past 18 years. I had the greatest privilege of sharing clinic problems, research ideas, and personal thoughts with him. Eliova was one of those souls that is not here or there, he was just everywhere, and so will he continue.

It is said that behind every great man is a great woman. His wife Eva played that role masterfully. The two made an incredible couple, devoted to their family. He left three daughters, Celia, Helena and Vera, six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

One of us (AR) met him over 20 years ago and I looked forward to our frequent reunions in Brazil

and around the world at IHS meetings. He was a good friend, always exuding warmth and offering gentle advice and a special type of deep wisdom. We emailed each other until a year before his passing. Once when I was lecturing in Curitiba at the Brazilian Headache Society meeting, I decided to start my talk in Portuguese. He sat with me for 45 minutes training my pronunciation and was quick to congratulate me afterwards. He was generous beyond words, happy, smiling, intelligent, and just special to be around. I always had a smile on my face when we were together.

Thanks for everything, Dr. Zukerman!

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