

BIOGRAPHY ΒΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ

Professor Miroslav Mydlík, MD, DSc. (1932–2018†) A scientist

Professor Miroslav Mydlík MD, DSc. was one of the most important pioneers in the field of nephrology in Central Europe during the second half of the 20th century. He was very active as a physician, scientist, internist and nephrologist, especially in the field of renal replacement therapy in patients suffering from acute or chronic renal failure and with acute poisonings. He was a founder of a Dialysis Centre at the First –now Fourth– Internal Clinic of the University Hospital of L. Pasteur in Košice. He carried out the first haemoperfusion through active charcoal in the former state of Czechoslovakia (1977). He was one of those clinical scientists who raised Slovak nephrology to international level.

1. INTRODUCTION

Professor Miroslav Mydlík, MD, DSc. was one of the leading medical personalities of Central Europe during the second half of the 20th and early 21st century. As an internist and nephrologist, he devoted all his life to his work, influencing the development of medicine in the state of Czechoslovakia and the Republic of Slovakia.^{1–9}

Professor Mydlík (fig. 1) was born on 21 July 1932 in Košice, then in Czechoslovakia, and died on 6 September 2018 in Košice, now in Slovakia. After finishing high school at the 1st State Gymnasium in Košice in 1951, he started his medical studies and successfully graduated from the Medical Faculty of Charles University (MF-CU) in Prague, in 1957.

After graduation, he began working as a house physician at the Department of Infectious Diseases of the Faculty Hospital of the Regional Institute of National Health (KÚNZ) in Košice. In December 1959, he was appointed house physician at the Internal Clinic of the Faculty Hospital KÚNZ in Košice.

2. POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

He successfully passed the 1st degree (1961) and 2nd degree attestation in internal medicine in 1964. From 1964 to 1979, he worked as an Assistant Professor at the

ARCHIVES OF HELLENIC MEDICINE 2020, 37(Suppl 2):22–28
ΑΡΧΕΙΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΙΑΤΡΙΚΗΣ 2020, 37(Συμπλ 2):22–28

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(*1932 – †2018) –
Ένας επιστήμονας

Περίληψη στο τέλος του άρθρου

Key words

Acute and chronic renal failure
Haemoperfusion
Miroslav Mydlík
Renal replacement therapy Slovakia



Figure 1. Professor Miroslav Mydlík, MD, DSc. (1932–2018).

First Internal Clinic [later renamed as Fourth Internal Clinic of the Medical Faculty of P.J. Šafárik University (UPJŠ)]. From 1972 to 1975, he was a leading teacher to undergraduate

students of the UPJŠ Medical Faculty. In 1971, he successfully defended his PhD thesis in clinical nephrology and, in 1973 he passed his specialisation in nephrology, the first person in Slovakia to do so. In 1984, he successfully defended his academic title of Doctor of Medical Sciences at the MF-CU in Prague. Due to the political situation at the UPJŠ Medical Faculty, he only became Associate Professor of Internal Medicine in 1990. In 1992, he was appointed Full Professor of Internal Medicine by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic Václav Havel. In 2004, he became Professor Emeritus at the UPJŠ.

3. POSITIONS COVERED

Professor Mydlík was an Assistant Professor at the First Internal Clinic of the UPJŠ Medical Faculty and Head of the Dialysis Centre from 1964 to 1979. From 1979 to April 1992, he worked as a nephrology registrar while serving as Head of the Dialysis Centre of the Fourth Internal Clinic at Faculty Hospital, subsequently renamed Faculty Hospital of Louis Pasteur (FHLP) in 1993, and currently University Hospital of Louis Pasteur (UHLP). He was Head of the Fourth Internal Clinic (1992–1997); founder and Head of the Nephrology Clinic (1997–2003). He served as UPJŠ vice-rector for international relations (1994–1997); Head of the Subchair of Nephrology and Dialysis of the Postgraduate School of Medicine in Bratislava (1991–2003); President of the Medical Association in Košice (1990–2002); and principal expert for nephrology of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (1994–2007).

4. CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

In 1963, Mydlík performed the first percutaneous renal biopsy and in January 1966 he founded a Dialysis Centre at the First Internal Clinic. He was also one of the founders of the Nephrology Section of the Slovak Internal Society (1969). He carried out the first haemoperfusion through active charcoal in the former Czechoslovakia (1977) in a patient suffering from paraquat poisoning.¹⁰ He enhanced and advanced the quality of the Dialysis Centre (1970–1990) and gradually introduced additional extracorporeal elimination methods and CAPD, which are still used in various dialysis centres.¹¹

He was interested in improving the Nephrological Laboratory of the First later the Fourth Internal Clinic and Nephrology Clinic. From 1969 to 2008, many special biochemical laboratory methods were introduced under the leadership of Eng. Katarína Derzsiová. On 24 October 1997,

thanks to Professor Mydlík's initiative, the Nephrology Clinic of FHLP and of the UPJŠ Medical Faculty was established, the first of its kind in Slovakia. Due to conditions prevailing at that time, most dialysis centres were privatised, including the Nephrology Clinic in 2006.

Professor Mydlík, as the former Head of the Dialysis Unit and Head of the Fourth Internal Clinic and Nephrology Clinic of the Medical Faculty of UPJŠ and FHLP, conducted important clinical studies on over 1,300 patients who underwent renal biopsy,¹² 1,500 patients who underwent renal replacement therapy, 380 patients with acute poisonings¹³ and 229 patients with acute renal failure.¹⁴

5. RESULT OF HIS ACTIVITIES

As President of the Medical Association in Košice, Professor Mydlík organised 12 East-Slovakian Medical Days in Nový Smokovec, the High Tatras. From 1994 to 2018, he organised 25 memorials named after his teacher Professor František Pór, MD, who was a founder of the 1st Internal Clinic of the UPJŠ Medical Faculty and of the Faculty Hospital in Košice (1948). Professor Pór was Head of the First Internal Clinic from 1948 to 1971. Professor Mydlík prepared the program of the 25th memorial, but he did not participate as he was ill. From 1995 to 2017, he also organised 23 scientific meetings in cooperation with the Medical Association of Košice for general practitioners. Most of the meetings were held in Ruskov, near Košice. As a Board member of the Slovak Nephrological Society, he organised many National Nephrological Congresses and International Nephrological Symposiums.

As the leading Nephrology expert of the Slovak Republic's Ministry of Health, he developed a network of new dialysis centres to provide evenly covered services throughout Slovakia.

As the Head of the Subchair of Nephrology and Dialysis of the Postgraduate School of Medicine, he continuously performed undergraduate and postgraduate educational activities. He trained numerous physicians, nephrologists and enabled them to perform attestation examinations in nephrology. For many years, he was chairman of the Attestation Committee.

6. SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

Professor Mydlík's studies were focused on internal medicine and nephrology and also on clinical biochemistry, to which he devoted his entire active life.

The main topics of his research were: "Metabolic changes in chronic renal failure (CRF)", "Metabolic disorders of some vitamins in CRF", "Vitamin B₆ and oxalate as uremic toxin", "Haemoperfusion in acute poisoning *in vivo* and *in vitro* and acute intermittent porphyria". In addition to these and in cooperation with Eng. Katarína Derzsiová, he studied renal function after long-term runs, the results of which were important for sports physicians and were presented at several national and international congresses and published in regional and international journals.¹⁵⁻²¹

He published over 450 scientific papers in regional and foreign journals and over 790 presentations at domestic and international congresses in Europe, the USA and Asia. Professor Mydlík's first publication was in 1961, in the journal "Vnitřní lékařství", which remained one of his favourite journals. February 2012 marked 50 years since his first publication in this journal. Up to 2012, he had contributed 105 articles to this journal.²² Most of the original papers had a clinical-biochemical focus and were researched at the Nephrological Laboratory.

He was also a co-author of the first Slovak monograph in nephrology: *Dzúrik R, Šašinka M, Mydlík, Kovács L et al.: Nephrology. Bratislava, Herba, Ltd. 2004, 877 p, (fig. 2).*

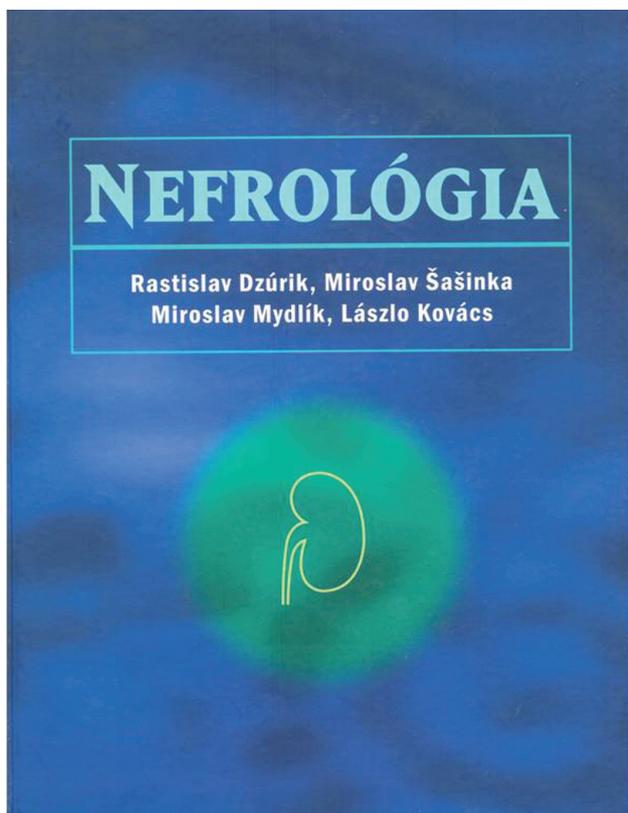


Figure 2. Dzúrik R, Šašinka M, Mydlík M, Kovács L et al. Nephrology 2004.

Together with Professor Julius Vajó, MD, DSc., they were editors of a very important book: *Mydlík M, Vajó (Eds.). History of the University Hospital of Louis Pasteur in Košice*, Edit. UPJŠ in Košice, 470 p (2013), (fig. 3).

Since 1993, Professor Mydlík, in cooperation with the Medical School, initiated the awarding the honorary title of "Doctor Honoris Causa" (DHC) of UPJŠ in Košice to seven outstanding professors of nephrology from Europe and the USA: Shaul G. Massry (1993, USA), Joel D. Kopple (1995, USA), Horst Klinkmann (1997, Germany), Franciszek Kokot (1997, Poland), Natale G. De Santo (1999, Italy), Guido Bellinghieri (2000, Italy) and Vittorio Bonomini (2006, Italy), (fig. 4). All these awardees were also visiting professors at the UPJŠ Medical School in Košice. The day after the award of the degree, an International Symposium on Nephrology was held on "Metabolic changes in chronic renal failure" (six after DHC, three on the occasion of the anniversary of Professor Mydlík, and one in memory of Professor Válek).²³

7. TEACHERS WHO DIRECTED HIM TO NEPHROLOGY

7.1. Professor František Pór, MD

Professor František Pór, MD, his teacher and superior

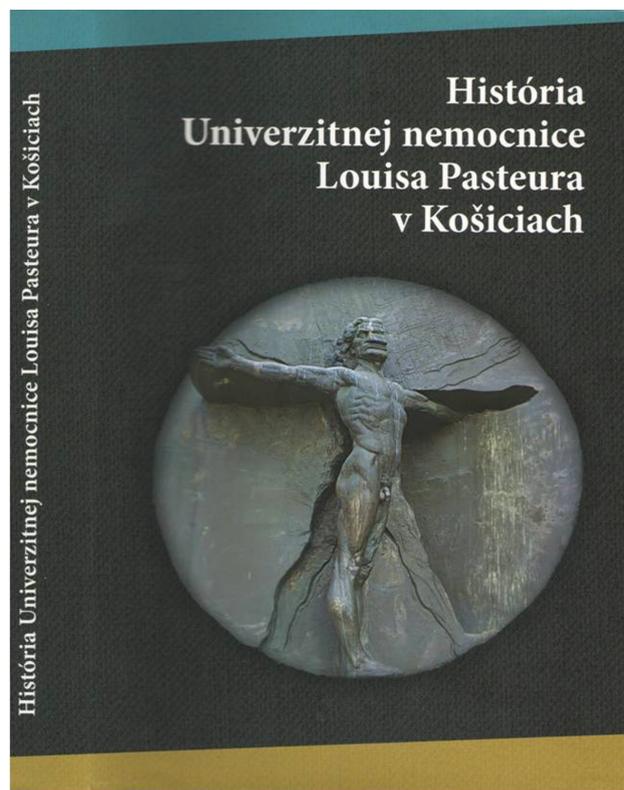


Figure 3. Mydlík M, Vajó J (eds) History of the University Hospital of Louis Pasteur in Košice, 2013.



Figure 4. Doctors Honoris Causa of UPJŠ, Košice.

was one of the most remarkable physicians in Czechoslovakia. Professor Mydlík gave a lecture on his work: “Professor František Pór – an Outstanding Internist from Former Czechoslovakia” at the 43rd Congress of the International Society for the History of Medicine, in Abbano-Terme, Italy, 2012.²⁴

7.2. Professor Jan Brod, MD, DSc.

Professor Jan Brod, MD, DSc. was one of the greatest nephrologists and cardiologists who worked in Prague and other places worldwide. Professor Mydlík gave lectures on his work: “*Jan Brod and his contribution to hypertension and nephrology*” at the 7th Congress of the International Association for the History of Nephrology (IAHN) in Torun, Poland, 2010 and “*The kidneys*” by Jan Brod: *the impact of the textbook on nephrology*” at the 8th IAHN Congress in Ancient Olympia-Patras, Greece, 2013.^{25,26} In Prague, Mydlík learned the kidney biopsy procedures under the supervision of Professor Brod, which he immediately adopted in

Košice upon his return.¹² He also actively participated in a research project on “The measurement of blood pressure by direct and indirect methods”, published in 1966.²⁷

8. POSITIONS IN SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES

Professor Mydlík was a Board Member of the Slovak Nephrological Society (1969–2007); a member of the European Renal Association-European Dialysis and Transplantation Association, a member of the European Society for Artificial Organs, and a member of the International Society for Artificial Organs. He was an Honorary Member of the Polish Society of Nephrology (1995), the Slovak Medical Society (1997), the Czech Society of Nephrology (2002), the Slovak Society of Nephrology (2007), the Slovak Society of Internal Medicine (2012) and an Honorary Member of the Czech Medical Society (2009). He was a Council member of the International Association for the History of Nephrology (2010–2015). In September 2016, Professor Mydlík contributed to the foundation of the European Association

of Professors Emeriti (EAPE) in Athens, where he gave a talk and was elected to the Council at Large of the newly founded association.

9. LAST YEARS

After his retirement on 31 August 2003, he did not stop working. He started working in a non-state dialysis centre and in the outpatient nephrological department of Nephron Ltd. until December 2007. He continued to work one day a week up to December 2017 at an internal-nephrological outpatient department at the 4th Internal Clinic, UHLP and as a scientific contributor to the Institute of Experimental Medicine, UPJŠ Medical School. He also continued to give lectures to Slovak and foreign university medical students. From 2010 to 2017, Professor Mydlík was a promoter of “Survival is not enough”, an event organised by the Italian Institute for Philosophical Sciences for the World Kidney Day (WKD). He continued to organise a yearly event on WKD in Kežmarok where he was a consultant of the Dialysis Centre Dialcorp Ltd.²⁸⁻³⁰

10. HONOURS

Professor Miroslav Mydlík was a Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Medicine of Bruxelles (Belgium), at the Nephrological Clinic of the Medical University in Katowice (Poland) following an invitation by Professor Franciszek Kokot and at the Moscow Institute of Medicine of the URSS Academy at the invitation of Professor Irina J. Tareieva.

He was awarded many honours, the most important of which were: the Purkyně Medal of the Czechoslovak Medical Society (1979); the International Distinguished Medal of the National Kidney Foundation (USA), (1994), (fig. 5); the University of Messina Medal, Italy (2000); the “Sigillo Magno” Medal of Bologna University (2002); the “Golden Kidney” Medal of the Slovak Nephrological Society (2002); the Campania Sicily Branch Medal of the Italian Society Branch of Nephrology; the Teofil Rudolph Niederland Prize – the highest honour awarded by the Presidium of the Slovak Medical Society, as the highest prize to a top specialist (only one scientist per year) for his long-term significant scientific and professional activities in medicine (Bratislava, 2009); the UPJŠ Gold Medal, Košice (2009); “The Lifelong Contribution Award for Medical and Biological Sciences” awarded by the Board of the Literary Fund of the Slovak Republic (2014); **On 8 December 2015, he was admitted to the “Hall of Glory of Slovak Medicine”** in Bratislava, for outstanding results in his lifelong professional scientific



Figure 5. Professor Mydlík was awarded the International Distinguished Medal of the National Kidney Foundation (USA), (1994).

and pedagogical work, for the successful representation of Slovak medicine at home and abroad and for his significant contribution to the development of continuing education healthcare workers and the Slovak Medical Society.

On 27 September 2018, at the Meeting of the Scientific Council of the Medical Faculty of UPJŠ, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of its foundation, Professor Miroslav Mydlík was awarded a medal in memoriam. The medal was received by Eng. Katarína Derzsiová.

11. OTHER INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

He was interested in world literature, fine arts, theatre, classical music, the history of Egypt, Greece and Italy and the history of medicine, mainly the history of nephrology. Since 2003 to 2017 he regularly attended the IAHN congresses mostly as an active participant. His lifelong literary interests were the works of Franz Kafka. Since 1963, when he became acquainted with Kafka’s work in an article in “World literature”, he started considering the idea of creating a monument to the Prague-born German writer Franz Kafka in the High Tatras. Kafka had been treated for lung tuberculosis in Tatranské Matliare from 18 December 1920 to 27 August 1921. Professor Mydlík achieved this dream on 16 May 2001, when a monument of Franz Kafka was unveiled in Tatranské Matliare and the 1st International Medical and Literary Symposium, dedicated to the writer, took place there. Professor Mydlík organised eight International Medical-Literary Symposiums dedicated to Kafka (2001–2014), in the High Tatras. The last Franz Kafka Medical and Literary Memorial was held in Kežmarok (2017), on

the occasion of the release of a book by Miroslav Mydlík and Katarína Derzsiová entitled *Lung tuberculosis of Franz Kafka. The influence of disease on his literary work*. Events were scheduled for the release of the book at the UPJŠ Historical Hall in Kosice and at the Franz Kafka Centre in Prague but were not held in the end.

12. CONCLUSIONS

Professor Miroslav Mydlík, MD, DSc. will be remembered forever, not only as an extraordinary internist and nephrologist, a propagator of Czechoslovak and Slovak nephrology

but also as a good and close friend of many Slovak and Czech nephrologists and also of many outstanding foreign nephrologists. He left a historical impact on the international medical and scientific community. His impact in the field of nephrology in Slovakia was significant. He was a scientist, a teacher, a clinician – “a great professor”, and a man.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am thankful to Professor Garabed Eknayan, MD, Baylor College of Medicine, Huston, Texas, for his accurate and critically revision, suggestions and for editing this manuscript.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

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Αρχεία Ελληνικής Ιατρικής 2020, 37(Συμπλ 2):22–28

Ο καθηγητής Miroslav Mydlík, MD, DSc. ήταν ένας από τους σημαντικότερους πρωτοπόρους στον τομέα της Νεφρολογίας στην Κεντρική Ευρώπη κατά το δεύτερο μισό του 20ού αιώνα. Ήταν πολύ δραστήριος ως γιατρός, επιστήμονας, παθολόγος και νεφρολόγος, ειδικά στον τομέα της θεραπείας υποκατάστασης της νεφρικής λειτουργίας σε ασθενείς που πάσχουν από οξεία ή χρόνια νεφρική ανεπάρκεια και με οξείες δηλητηριάσεις. Ήταν ιδρυτής του Κέντρου Αιμοκάθαρσης στην 1η –τώρα 4η– Παθολογική Κλινική του Πανεπιστημιακού Νοσοκομείου L. Pasteur στο Košice. Διεξήγαγε την πρώτη αιμοπροσρόφηση μέσω ενεργού άνθρακα στην πρώην Τσεχοσλοβακία (1977). Ήταν ένας από τους κλινικούς επιστήμονες που ανύψωσε τη σλοβακική Νεφρολογία σε διεθνές επίπεδο.

Λέξεις ευρητηρίου: Αιμοπροσρόφηση, Θεραπεία υποκατάστασης νεφρικής λειτουργίας Σλοβακία, Miroslav Mydlík, Οξεία και χρόνια νεφρική ανεπάρκεια

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