

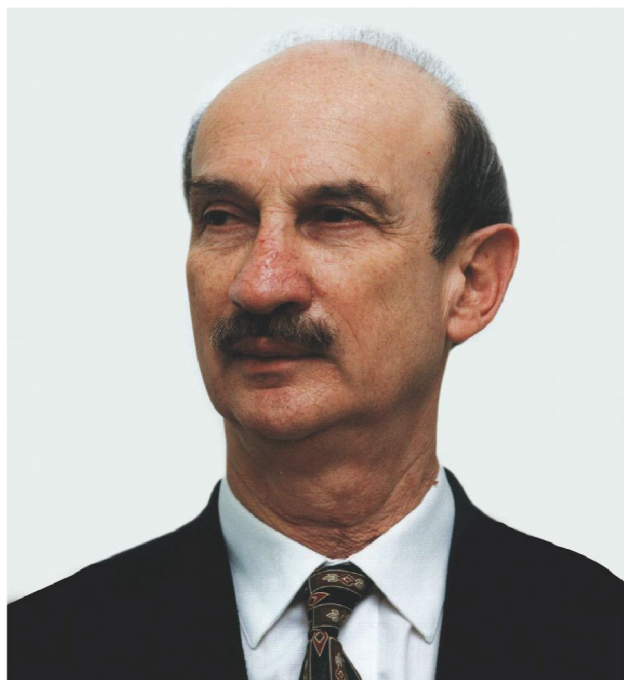


## A tribute to Uri A. Liberman, 1935–2022

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With his passing on November 13, 2022, Uri A. Liberman, M.D., Ph.D., has left a great void in the bone community. The field has lost an esteemed colleague and a groundbreaking scientist who made significant contributions to the field of bone metabolism. Uri Liberman will also be remembered as a respected physician in internal medicine and endocrinology and as an educator who trained generations of pre- and post-doctoral students. The many colleagues around the world who have had the privilege of knowing Uri will miss his steady presence at international

meetings which he regularly attended, most often together with his beloved late wife Ayala.

As Professor of Physiology and Medicine at Tel Aviv University Department of Physiology and Pharmacology, Uri looked back on a long and distinguished career which began in 1961, after he completed his medical studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and then followed by training in internal medicine at the prestigious Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tikva, Israel (now Rabin Medical Center).

His interest for translational research began with detailed research in renal physiology studying the metabolism of the purine nucleotides focusing on the deficiency of xanthine oxidase activity. This work led to a better understanding of gout and key risk factors for kidney stone formation. Uri completed a PhD at the University of California, San Francisco, USA, working on the link between thyroid thermogenesis and  $\text{Na}^+ + \text{K}^+$  ATPase activity in skeletal muscle and in the renal tubule. In studies spanning two decades, he described genetic abnormalities associated with resistance to 1,25-dihydroxvitamin D. Vitamin D-resistant rickets became his special area of interest.

One of Uri's key and lasting contributions to the field of bone and mineral metabolism was the notable paper "Oral alendronate on bone mineral density and the incidence of fractures in postmenopausal osteoporosis. The Alendronate Phase III Osteoporosis Treatment Study Group" which was the first study to provide definitive fracture risk data which ultimately led to the bisphosphonate's approval by regulatory agencies, its consequent widespread clinical use, and to further research on other bisphosphonates. He further published numerous, impactful publications on bisphosphonates, including "Ten years' experience with alendronate for osteoporosis in postmenopausal women" in *N Engl J Med* (2004).

Internationally active throughout his career, Uri was a visiting scientist at the US National Institute of Health and visiting lecturer at various universities in the USA, Europe, South America, and Japan. He was also very active in many bone-related organizations during his lifetime. He was a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Task

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Force on Osteoporosis and a Board member of the International Federation of Societies on Skeletal Diseases (IFSSD), which later merged with the European Foundation for Osteoporosis (EFFO) to become the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) in 1998. Uri served on IOF's Board of Governance from 1998 until 2011 and continued to serve as a valued member of the IOF Scientific Advisory Committee (CSA) until his death. Within the CSA, he most recently contributed as a member of the IOF CSA Epidemiology Quality of Life Working Group, the Skeletal Rare Diseases Working Group, and the Inadequate Responders Working Group. He was also active within IOF by representing the Israeli Calcified Tissue Society within the IOF Committee of National Societies and through his active participation in each of IOF's annual World Congresses. Uri was also an inaugural member of the ASBMR and was on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Paget's Disease Foundation for close to two decades.

Within Israel, Uri was undisputedly a driving force in research, education, and national bone health advocacy throughout his career. He was the Director of the first metabolic unit established in Israel and rotating director of the Institute of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases at the Rabin-Beilinson Medical Center. He established the Israeli Foundation for Osteoporosis and Bone Diseases in 1993, remaining as the Foundation's Chair until his death. He was

also President of the Israeli Calcified Tissue Society from 1993 to 2000. Passionate about patient care, he promoted the inclusion of quality indicators for post-hip fracture care, supported the implementation of fracture liaison services in Israel, and worked to drive educational programs for physicians and the general public.

Uri Liberman's work was recognized in various national and international research awards, including the IBMS John G. Haddad Jr. Award which he received in 2001. He published over 150 articles in leading international medical journals, as well as textbook chapters in endocrinology and bone and mineral metabolism.

Uri will be not be forgotten—his many lasting contributions will continue to enrich the bone field, and so many of us around the world will retain fond memories of Uri as a friend, colleague, and teacher.

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