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Saul Krugman, 84; Led Fight to Vanquish Child

By WOLFGANG SAXON

Dr. Saul Krugman, a longtime head of pediatrics at the New York University School of Medicine and a leader in the development of vaccines against measles, rubella and hepatitis, died on Thursday at Broward General Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He was 84 and had lived in Fort Lauderdale since his retirement in 1991 as professor of pediatrics at New York University Medical Center.

The cause was a cerebral hemorrhage, a spokesman for the medical center in New York said.

Dr. Krugman's association with N.Y.U. lasted 47 years. He was chairman of the department of pediatrics from 1960 to 1975, a period during which he also directed the pediatric service at Bellevue Hospital. He established one of the country's first comprehensive children's health clinics, setting a pattern for medical centers elsewhere in the country.

He and his co-workers evaluated newly developed vaccines against polio, measles, rubella and hepatitis B. In his crowning achievement, he unraveled the mysteries of viral hepatitis and helped defeat that family of debilitating diseases.

Dr. Krugman, the author of well over 200 scientific papers, received many honors in this country and abroad, including a medical research award for public service in 1993 from the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation. Its citation said that Dr. Krugman had provided "critically important studies of hepatitis, rubella and measles." It singled out his pivotal role in creating a vaccine against the hepatitis B virus. That insidious microscopic organism caused liver disease for an estimated 300 million people around the world and contributed significantly to liver cancer.

Dr. Krugman's studies were the first to show that what was then called type A, or infectious, hepatitis, which is transmitted by oral contact with infected material, was different from hepatitis B, which is transmitted by blood and sexual contact. Subsequent research has shown that a number of viruses cause different types of hepatitis.

His field trials also proved the effectiveness of the first vaccine against rubella in 1969. A usually mild disease then known as German measles, rubella can cause severe brain damage and other disabilities

A scientist who did 'more than any other person ever' to fight childhood disease.

in a fetus. Once a recurring epidemic, vaccination virtually eliminated birth defects from it in this country.

Similarly, he led the way with tests gaining the approval and wide use of the first vaccine against measles, once a threat to all children. Effective vaccination made it a medical rarity, too.

"Saul Krugman has done more to eliminate pediatric infectious diseases than any other person ever," said Dr. Wade Parks, chairman of the pediatrics department at the N.Y.U. School of Medicine.

Dr. Krugman's career came under a shadow in the late 1960's after accusations that he had used retarded children at the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island as human guinea pigs for his hepatitis research. But in 1971, his chief critic in

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KRUGMAN—Saul. A towering figure in pediatrics, Saul Krugman, MD, Emeritus professor & former chairman of the Department of Pediatrics of the New York University School of Medicine left an indelible impact on pediatric, epidemiology and public health. Renowned for his pioneering research on vaccine development, he was the pioneer in the testing of vaccine against three viral diseases, measles, rubella and hepatitis B. He led the way in developing and conducting the field trials that lead to widespread use of the first vaccines against viral diseases. Measles, once a threat to all children, is prevented in this country, where more than 95% of children are vaccinated. In 1969, he was active in trials that confirmed the effectiveness of the first vaccine against rubella, then commonly known as German measles. He proved the effectiveness of his vaccine used to prevent hepatitis B.

He was a distinguished teacher, scientist and physician, respected by his colleagues and peers, and beloved by students. A national figure with an international reputation, he was the ideal of the physician & scientist. He combined the vast knowledge of pediatrics with the great abilities of an innovative and imaginative investigator to the enormous benefit to patient care.

The trustees, faculty, administration, alumni and many students of New York University and its School of Medicine acknowledge the enormous contribution to medicine and mankind of Dr. Saul Krugman. He epitomized the physician-scientist. We mourn his loss and his camaraderie & extend our deepest sympathy to his beloved wife and forever his supportive companion, Sylvia, his son Dr. Richard Krugman, an alumnus of NYU School of Medicine class of 1968 & currently Dean of Medicine of the University of Colorado, his daughter Carol Krugman, and the entire Krugman family.

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New York University flag has been lowered at half mast over the medical school in Dr. Krugman's memory.