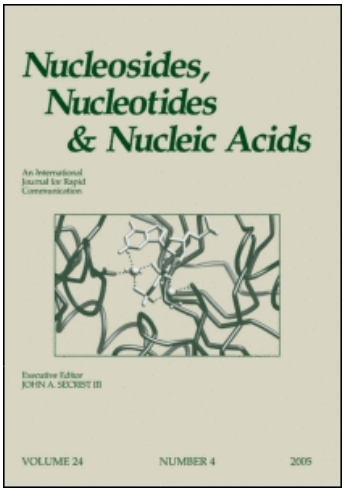

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In Memoriam: Albert van Gennip (1943-2007)

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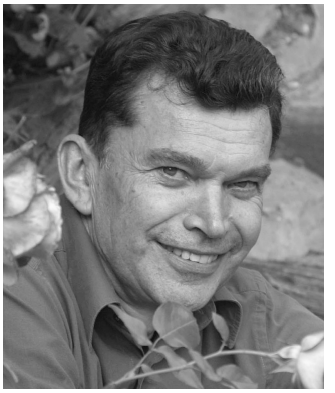
IN MEMORIAM: ALBERT VAN GENNIP (1943–2007)



On Sunday July 8, 2007 our dear colleague and friend Dr. Albert van Gennip passed away at the age of 63 from a terminal illness, leaving behind his wife, three children, and two grandchildren.

Albert van Gennip was the head of the laboratory of Genetic Metabolic Diseases (GMD) in the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam from 1989 until 2002. Trained as a clinical chemist with special interest in inborn errors of metabolism, he played a central role in the development and implementation of novel techniques and assays and was one of the first who recognized the importance of tandem-mass spectrometry for the field of inborn errors. Thanks to his initiatives, vision, and pioneering work, the laboratory of GMD was transformed into a nationally and internationally recognised state-of-the-art laboratory. In 2002, he moved to the University Hospital of Maastricht where he was a member of the scientific staff of the laboratory for Biochemical Genetics.

As a founder of the European Research Network for Evaluation and Improvement of Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment of Inherited Disorders of Metabolism (ERNDIM), Albert fulfilled an active role in the introduction and implementation of the concept of quality control in national and international laboratories. Albert was also a cofounder of the Dutch Society of Inborn Errors of Metabolism (ESN) which was established to facilitate the

interaction between colleagues and advance the understanding of inborn errors of metabolism. In recognition of his commitment and dedication, he was appointed as honorary member of the Society in 2006.

Within the field of inborn errors, Albert van Gennip developed a special interest for purines and pyrimidines which started almost three decades ago when he developed novel two-dimensional thin layer chromatographic methods for the analysis of urinary purines and pyrimidines. The title of his Ph.D. thesis in 1981 was, "Screening for disorders of purine and pyrimidine metabolism, a chromatographic approach."

His love for purines and pyrimidines continued over the years and Albert was always eager to improve and introduce new methodologies for their analysis to allow the identification of patients with inherited or acquired inborn errors of purine and pyrimidine metabolism. Thanks to his expertise, Albert has been involved in the diagnosis of the first patients with a dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase, dihydropyrimidinase and ß-ureidopropionase deficiency. In addition, he also initiated and supervised research on purine and pyrimidine metabolism in cancer cells in the Academic Medical Center and developed a close relationship and collaboration with the University Hospital Nijmegen. His achievements and expertise within the field of purine and pyrimidine metabolism were internationally greatly recognised and acknowledged.

We have lost a highly esteemed colleague and a dear friend. His personality, enthusiasm, support and warm friendship will be missed greatly by all of us.

Andre van Kuilenburg, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Ronney de Abreu, Nijmegen, The Netherlands