Pioneer of ceramic implantology Prof. Sami Sandhaus dies at 92

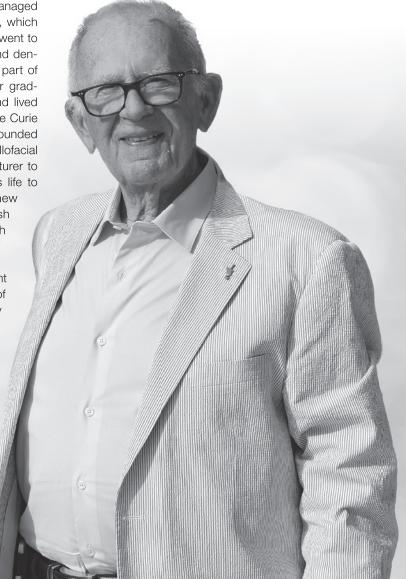
On the first weekend of October, a true pioneer in the field of implantology passed away at age 92 after a life of great success and achievement. In dentistry, Prof. Sami Sandhaus was best known for the development of ceramic dental implants. With the crystalline bone screw (CBS) implant made of white polycrystalline aluminium oxide, he succeeded in 1960 in creating a true innovation: a metal-free biocompatible implant. Under the name SIGMA dental implant, the CBS system was available on the dental market for quite some time, albeit in a slightly modified form.

Prof. Sandhaus was born in 1927 in the western Ukrainian town of Chernovtsi, which at the time was a flourishing centre of Jewish life and culture. Because of his Jewish ancestry, he was subjected to the horrors of the Nazi regime first-hand. At the age of 14, after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, he was sent to a concentration camp. Unlike most of the deportees, he managed to escape, which led him via Romania to Israel, which was only formed in 1948. Later, Prof. Sandhaus went to Germany, where he studied human medicine and dentistry at the Düsseldorf Medical Academy (now part of the Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf). After graduating in 1959, he emigrated to Switzerland and lived there until his death. At Université Pierre et Marie Curie (now part of Sorbonne University), which was founded in 1968, he specialised in dentistry and maxillofacial surgery and passed on his knowledge as a lecturer to future generations. Prof. Sandhaus devoted his life to research, teaching and the development of new dental implant technologies. He set out to banish metal from living tissue by replacing metal with biocompatible materials.

The development of Prof. Sandhaus' CBS implant marked a turning point in the advancement of dental implant systems. However, as with many new ideas, the realisation of the advantages of metal-free dental prostheses gained ground slowly. It is only in recent years that ceramic has been considered a material superior to titanium in terms of biocompatibility, healing time, wear resistance and aesthetics in dental implantology. Throughout his entire career, Prof. Sandhaus persistently sought to convey these benefits to dentists and patients all over the world. To this end, he

founded the Forum Odontologicum in Lausanne, an educational institute for dentists and dental technicians that offers postgraduate courses in restorative dentistry and implantology, and the International Society for Oral Rehabilitation. During the sixth International Academy of Ceramic Implants World Congress in Miami in 2017, Prof. Sandhaus was honoured for his lifetime achievements in ceramic implantology by IAOCI President Dr Sammy Noumbissi.

Prof. Sami Sandhaus was invited as a guest of honour by European Society for Ceramic Implantology President Dr Jens Tartsch to the first congress of the society, which was held from 10 to 12 October in Zurich. He was unfortunately unable to take up the invitation owing to his poor physical condition.



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