

Tribute to Prof. Hans-Joachim Lindemann (1920–2012)

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Hans-Joachim Lindemann, the Godfather of Modern Hysteroscopy, passed away at the age of 92 years in his beloved place at the Starnberger See near Munich.

He was born and raised in Berlin. After his final examination in 1939, he started his medical study at the Humboldt University and, during the Second World War, continued his education in Greifswald and Rostock. He was Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the Diakonissen Krankenhaus in Hamburg from 1952 till 1962. Later, he became the Head of Department in the Elisabeth Krankenhaus in the same town.

His interest in hysteroscopy started during an infertility congress in Dubrovnik in 1969 after a debate on the possibilities of exploring the uterine cavity. From that moment on, he devoted his professional life to this technique. Being at the same time one of the pioneers of laparoscopy, he used his experience with CO₂ insufflation to obtain distension of the

uterine cavity. His trailblazing experiments on dogs eventually led to the development of safe and easy-to-use hysteroflators that have been successfully used for many decades. With the ambulatory endoscopic surgery, laparoscopic as well as hysteroscopic, Lindemann set another milestone in modern medicine. Renowned colleagues from all over the world such as Jordan Philips, founder of the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL), and Patrick Steptoe, who performed the first successful IVF, came to his hospital to work and discuss the newest developments in endoscopy and infertility with him.

The high scientific value and utmost importance of his work for women's health was noticed throughout the entire world. Numerous universities honoured him with a doctor title and several international societies such as the AAGL and our European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy (ESGE) were proud to have him as honorary member.

Jochen—as his family and nearest friends called him—was also a warm and charming man. He was a wise and trustworthy person with a bright sense of humor and a large field of interest. Talking to Hans-Joachim Lindemann was always an experience and he kept on surprising us with his refreshing ideas about all aspects of life.

On September 7 of this year, the world has lost a great scientist and a beautiful human being. The ESGE pledges to honour his memory in an appropriate way for as long as the society exists.

R. Campo
President ESGE
Leuven, 26 September 2012