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EDITORIAL

Comment on the discovery of prostate specific antigen



The discovery of prostate specific antigen (PSA) and the clinical application of the PSA blood test as a diagnostic tool for prostate cancer is an important chapter in the history of urology. Innumerable men have been cured of prostate cancer as a direct result of early detection by the PSA test. Some time ago, I read a short article by Dr William J. Catalona, a world-renowned authority and major contributor to prostate cancer research, entitled *The 'True' history of the discovery of prostate-specific antigen* [1]. Dr Catalona's opinion is that the real credit for the "discovery" of PSA and its introduction into clinical use as a marker for prostate disease belongs to T. Ming Chu and Ming C. Wang at Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo, New York, in 1979. I then found out that Dr. Wang has passed away and his wife now lives in San Francisco. I learned from Mrs. Wang that both Drs. Chu and Wang graduated with bachelor's degrees in chemistry from National Taiwan University. Dr. Wang went to Canada for further studies and obtained a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Alberta before joining the research team at Roswell Park Memorial Institute. For several years, Dr. Wang worked tirelessly day and night on this project that had been abandoned by others. The team finally purified and characterized the PSA protein, developed a blood test for PSA, and suggested its potential as a biomarker for prostate cancer. Sadly, this defining moment in history is unknown to most urologists. The article by Dr Catalona [2] for the inaugural issue of the *Asian Journal of Urology* serves as a reminder of the important contributions Asians have made in the field of urology. I hope this will inspire young researchers to follow in the footsteps of pioneers like Drs. Wang and Chu to further the science and art of urology.



One of the discoverers of PSA, the late Ming C. Wang, PhD.

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- [2] Catalona WJ. History of the discovery and clinical translation of prostate-specific antigen. *Asian J Urol* 2014;1:12–4.

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