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Advances in Stem Cell Aging

This book series features the proceedings of the Else Kröner-Fresenius Symposia, which are intended to cover clinically relevant topics at the forefront of biomedical research. The meetings should give experts the opportunity to discuss the most recent findings in evolving fields of biomedicine and outline future research strategies.

Today’s research is characterized by the accelerated generation of biomedical data, the increasingly interdisciplinary and translational nature of biomedical science, as well as efforts to integrate the data into complex biological systems. These developments emphasize the need for new forums of discussion.

The understanding of stem cell aging in the context of other tissue and malignant tumors is highly relevant for future developments in biomedicine. Physiology, modulation, and pathology promise new perspectives in restoring organ function lost by disease or physical trauma and in overcoming pathophysiological conditions.

In this context, following the first Else Kröner-Fresenius Symposium held in May 2009 focusing on stem cell aging at the cellular and molecular level, Dr. Karl Lenhard Rudolph organized the 3rd Else Kröner-Fresenius Symposium in May 2011, with world renown experts discussing current advances of cell stem aging and illustrating new perspectives integrating diverse fields of stem cell research.

The Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung thanks Dr. Rudolph for his inspiring scientific work and personal outstanding input for organizing, together with his team, the 3rd Else Kröner-Fresenius Symposium.

The Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung


Else Kröner, born Fernau, was born on May 15, 1925, in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. At the age of 3 years, her father died. After his death, she lived with her mother in the home of Dr. Eduard Fresenius, a pharmacist and owner of the Hirsch Pharmacy in Frankfurt, who founded the pharmaceutical company Fresenius in 1912. Dr. Eduard Fresenius, whose marriage was childless,
took care of Else Fernau. In 1944, she started an internship at the Hirsch Pharmacy and decided to study pharmacy, which was supported by Dr. Eduard Fresenius. In 1946, Dr. Eduard Fresenius unexpectedly died. At that time, Else Fernau had not completed her pharmaceutical education. However, Dr. Eduard Fresenius bequeathed the Hirsch Pharmacy and the Fresenius company to her.

At the age of 21 years, Else Fernau decided, against the council of many, to take responsibility for the Hirsch Pharmacy and the Fresenius company. At that time, the Fresenius company was completely indebted. Of the original 400 employees, all but 30 had to be laid off. She joined efforts in the early 1950s with her later husband, Hans Kröner, a lawyer and economist, to ensure the survival and force the expansion of the company. The company was progressively rebuilt. At that time, the need to maintain the company determined all activities.

Entrepreneurial important and far-sighted business decisions in the 1950s and 1960s ensured the successful future development of the company. Decades of growth followed, in particular within the field of dialysis, nutrition and intensive care, leading to an internationally competitive enterprise and market leader in special areas of health care.

Until 1981, Else Kröner led the company. After the transformation of Fresenius into a stock company, Else Kröner remained chairman of the Supervisory Board until her death on June 5, 1988. From 1981 to 1992, her husband Hans Kröner led the company as CEO. Thereafter, he significantly influenced the policy of the Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung, of which he was chairman of the board from 1995 to 2005.

Today, the Fresenius group, of which the Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung is the leading shareholder, is an international healthcare group with products and services for dialysis, hospital, and medical care of patients. The Fresenius group currently employs nearly 150,000 people in over 100 countries and generates annual sales of over EUR 16 billion.

Else Kröner transferred nearly her entire fortune to the foundation for the pursuit of promoting medical science and providing humanitarian aid. It corresponds to her requests and represents the continuation of her concept that her fortune be used for nonprofit purposes. The symposia are published as part of the foundation’s commitment to the advancement of medical research and treatment.

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