

## Obituary

Marie Stiborová, 70, a professor of medicinal chemistry and biochemistry and former head of the Department of Biochemistry at the Faculty of Science, Charles University of Prague in the Czech Republic, died after a long bout with thyroid cancer on February 13, just days after her birthday.

Born in Modřany, now part of Prague, she earned her degrees in chemistry and biochemistry in the Faculty of Science of the Charles University in Prague. She received her doctorate in Biochemistry in 1978 for her work on plant alcohol dehydrogenases, their structure and properties, and the influences of various environmental factors.

She started her career as an independent researcher in 1978 in the Oncological Institute in Prague, where her interest shifted to interactions of environmental pollutants with nucleic acids, this research to be her main research topic in later years. After a short time, in 1981, she moved as an assistant professor to the Department of Environmental and Landscape Ecology at the Faculty of Science of Charles University, returning to the research of plant enzymes and their interaction with environmental pollutants (e.g., triazines and metal ions). This topic brought her finally back to the Department of Biochemistry at the same faculty in 1987, where she joined the group interested in various aspects of the metabolism of xenobiotics, incl. mechanism, activation, and function of P450s and peroxidases.

She then worked till her death in this department, promoted to an associate professor (in 1988), and a full professor (in 2007). She was a very active teacher, reading courses in general biochemistry, xenobiochemistry, and chemical carcinogenesis, and a very valued supervisor of students' work.

The scientific development of professor Stiborova was deeply influenced by the collaboration with the German Cancer Research Center in Heidelberg, which started by a stay here in 1989 and lasted till 2017. Her research interest was focused on aristolochic acids and their role in nephropathies and kidney cancer. At the same time, she developed excellent skills in the <sup>32</sup>P-postlabelling method for the study on nucleic acid covalent modifications with carcinogenic compounds. Later, this collaboration also included cancer research laboratories in the UK (London, Dundee). She co-authored six book chapters and about 400 scientific papers in international journals.

Stiborova was a member of the Czech Chemical Society, Czech Medical Association (Section of Experimental Pharmacology and Toxicology), and of the Czech Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, where she served since 2008 as a member of its committee. She actively participated in organizing several international scientific meetings, mostly in Prague (e.g., 2003 Cytochrome P450, 2009, 2018 FEBS Congresses). In the early 1990s, she was also politically active, serving for three legislative periods as a member of the Czech Parliament.

For her achievements, she received several awards, including the Memorial Medal of the Faculty of Science, and the Gold Medal of the Charles University - both of them she, unfortunately, could not accept in person.

Marie Stiborova is survived by her husband, Oldřich, daughter, Martina, and four grandchildren.

(thanks to Jiri Hudecek for preparing this)