



Obituary

Peter Fuchsberger 1950–1997



It is often said that death is blind, she is also cynical.

Recently, she has taken Peter Fuchsberger, one of the best of us and also one of the youngest.

Peter was born on 17 August 1950 in Martin in Slovakia. Both his parents were physicians and so his vocation was naturally oriented in this way. After graduation at the Medical Faculty in Martin and almost 10 years of hospital practice there, his interest in internal medicine made him move to Bratislava. Peter graduated as an oncologist and with his colleague Jan Lakota, he became a pioneer in the introduction of autologous bone marrow transplantation in Slovakia.

Peter Fuchsberger was asked to plan a transplantation program for the National Oncological Institute in Bratislava. He spent 1 year in the Centre Leon Berard in Lyon from 1990 to 1991, where he studied the laboratory and clinical aspects of marrow transplantation.

When he returned to Slovakia, he immediately set up a laboratory for purging marrow mainly for leukemias using cytostatic treatment. He also worked on techniques for freezing marrow and set up an excellent clinical program in leukemia, lymphoma and testicular and breast cancer.

Peter not only managed the laboratory and the clinic but also the infectious diseases in the marrow transplant section of the National Oncological Institute in Bratislava. As chief of the Bone Marrow Transplant Program, he educated many other oncologists in the Internal Medicine Clinic of the

National Institute of Oncology in Slovakia and thanks to this, his work will continue in Slovakia.

Peter Fuchsberger died on a Sunday evening, 21 September 1997 in a car accident where his little son, also named Peter, died with him. He was aged 47. His wife Suzanne and two daughters were injured but survive him.

Peter was firstly a man devoted to his family, his wife and his children. He also loved football and music. He had a deep concern for others. In April 1997, he explained in a public lecture why he still was very happy with his job as bone marrow transplanter: 'development of human knowledge is, from the technical point of view, proceeding dangerously fast. But the sense of our achievement remains unchanged and everlasting. Therefore, what will remain with us, is what we have given to others...'.
I can testify that when in Lyon Peter gave a lot to others and I know from Professor Koza, Director of the National Oncological Institute in Bratislava, that he gave a great deal to patients and their relatives, doctors, nurses, lab workers and technicians.

In French, instead of 'Bonjour', Peter always used to say 'Salut'. Now it is left to us to echo this with 'Salut l'ami!' Goodbye friend!

Thierry Philip