

Medical Philately



Fig. 1 : Nicolae Paulescu. Romany, 1994



Fig. 2 : Frederick Grant Banting. Transkei, 1990



Fig. 3 : Frederick Grant Banting. Canada, 2001



Fig. 4 : Charles Herbert Best. Kuwait, 1971



Fig. 5 : Instruments used to isolate 'isletin'. Canada, 1971

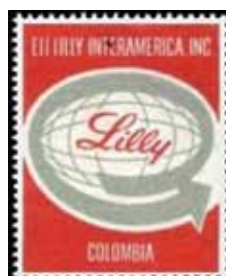


Fig. 6 : Lilly's pharmaceuticals. Republic of Colombia.



Fig. 7 : Bernardo Alberto Houssay. Argentina, 1997

DIABETES : MODERN TIMES

In 1921 Nicolae Paulescu (1869-1931) (Fig. 1) isolated a substance from pancreatic islets ('pancreine') and discovered that its injection induced hypoglycemia in dogs. One year later, Frederick Grant Banting (1891-1941) (Figs. 2 and 3), Charles Herbert Best (1899-1978) (Fig. 4) and John James Richard Macleod (1876-1935) isolated the same substance and called it 'isletin' (Fig. 5). It was administered for the first time to L. Thompson, a 14 years old diabetic patient, at Toronto General Hospital in 1922 and its name was changed into 'insulin'. Lilly's pharmaceuticals (Fig. 6) started its industrial production and commercialization in 1923; in the same year, Banting and Best won the Nobel Prize for Medicine for its discovery.

Some years later, Bernardo Alberto Houssay (1887-1971) (Fig. 7) demonstrated the antagonistic action of a pituitary substance towards insulin inducing diabetes in animals through the injections of pituitary extracts.

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