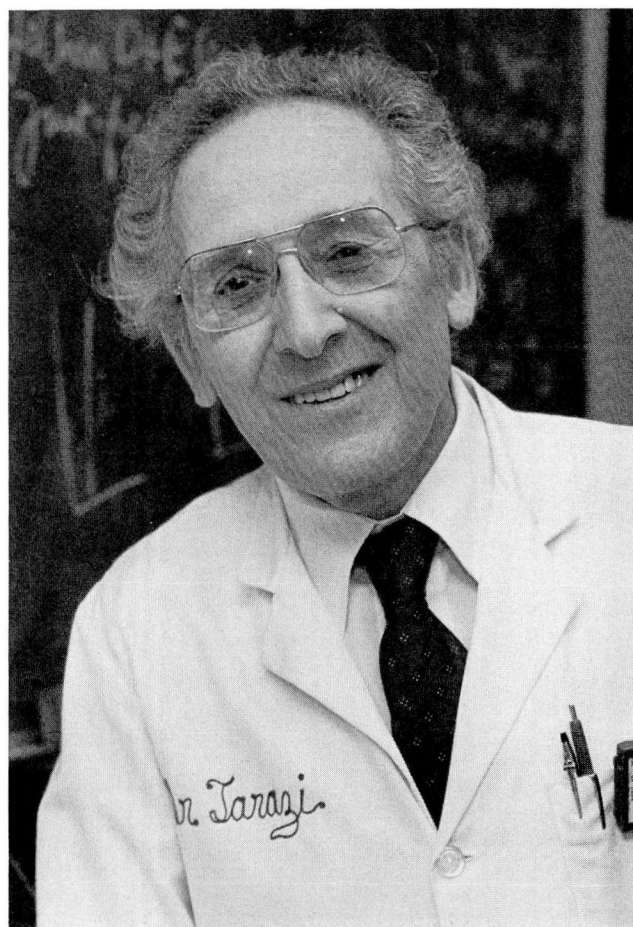


Robert C. Tarazi, M.D. (1925–1986)

Institutions provide opportunities for individuals, but individuals determine the ultimate success of institutions. Dr. Robert C. Tarazi was such an individual.

Dr. Tarazi pursued his medical training at the University of Cairo, with an emphasis in internal medicine and cardiology. He became a Lecturer and the Director of the Cardiovascular Laboratory on the Cairo University Faculty of Medicine. During 1959–1960, he did postgraduate work at Harvard Medical School under Paul Dudley White. In 1962, he and his family left Egypt for Beirut, Lebanon, where he stayed for three years. He then worked at the Cleveland Clinic as a Special Fellow in Cardiovascular Diseases. He became a U.S. citizen in 1970. During his research career, he also was a consultant on editorial advisory boards for several journals dealing with cardiology, hypertension, and internal medicine. He served on many national and international committees and was the recipient of several special awards for his work, including the Astra Award from the International Society of Hypertension for exceptional contributions to clinical pharmacology and the therapeutics of hypertension. He was known for his breadth of knowledge and diverse interests.

Dr. Tarazi joined the Cleveland Clinic as an Associate Staff member in 1967; by 1978, he was Chairman of the Clinical Science Department within the Research Division. In the course of a 20-year partnership with The Cleveland Clinic Foundation, he grew in stature to become a national and international leader and statesman in cardiovascular medicine, noted especially for his work in recognizing the cause-and-effect role of the heart in hypertension. He carried on the strong tradition of Irvine Page, and with his



Robert C. Tarazi, M.D.

colleagues in the Research Division and throughout the Foundation, kept the Cleveland Clinic at the forefront of discovery in hypertension and heart disease.

Dr. Tarazi's studies covered a wide range of basic research and clinical investigation. He and his many associates contributed to the understanding of basic cardiovascular physiology, in-

cluding the relationship of blood volume and volume changes to hypertension, the role of the renin-angiotensin system, the relationship of catecholamine to cardiac hypertrophy, and of hypertrophy to hypertension. The many therapies of hypertension—including diet, diuretics, vasodilators, converting enzyme inhibitors, alpha- and beta-blockers and calcium channel blockers—were the subject of his scholarship. As a clinical investigator, he collaborated with many physicians outside the Research Division, including colleagues in the Departments of Nephrology and Hypertension, Anesthesia, Urology, Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery, Endocrinology, and Radiology. Dr. Tarazi's vast experience with cardiovascular physiology led him to develop a new paradigm for the heart in hypertension—the heart as both victim and cause of blood pressure disorders. This particular line of investigation led to the award of a multimillion-dollar Specialized Center of Research (SCOR) grant in hypertension from the National Institutes of Health, one of only four awarded in the country. SCOR grants are awarded only for basic research that has a high probability of immediate clinical application. The goal of Dr. Tarazi's research team was to develop new, more effective drug treatments for hypertension.

Dr. Tarazi's career was remarkable. In Cairo, he was a busy clinical cardiologist involved primarily in patient care. He wrote a few clinical papers during that time about such topics as management of angina, heart failure, and arrhythmias. Those early years in Cairo must have given Dr. Tarazi a yearning to carry his clinical bedside experience into the laboratory and

thereby to do the virtually impossible—to embark on a successful scientific career after age 40, that milestone age when careers become set and allegedly are soon to peak. But Robert Tarazi came to Cleveland to start anew as a researcher at the age of 40, facing a new country, a new language, and a new beginning.

In retrospect, he seems to have made this passage with ease. One simple statistical index of his successful transformation is seen in his impressive publication record. At age 40, Dr. Tarazi, the clinician, had 19 publications to his credit; during his next 20 years at the Cleveland Clinic, Dr. Tarazi, the clinical investigator, authored or co-authored more than 300 major publications.

These incredibly productive Cleveland years were accompanied by much deserved personal happiness for Dr. Tarazi. He loved the Cleveland Clinic as a home, and he in turn was highly regarded by his many colleagues at the Foundation. He met and married Dr. Fetnat Fouad, who was his professional associate and closest friend. He was lauded by both his old country and his new one for his many accomplishments. The Cleveland Clinic offered this cardiologist from Cairo the opportunity, and subsequently, Dr. Tarazi, the compassionate physician, scholar, avid investigator, and gracious man, became one of the dynamic forces of the Cleveland Clinic.

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