

news THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT DALLAS

southwestern medical school - graduate school of biomedical sciences - school of allied health sciences

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******Dallas medical scientist named
president-elect of prestigious
American Society for Clinical
Investigation.*

DALLAS--Dr. John S. Fordtran of The Univeristy of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas will be the next president of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, generally recognized as the nation's most prestigious organization of clinical research scientists.

Dr. Fordtran, professor of internal medicine and a noted gastroenterologist at UTHSCD's Southwestern Medical School, was chosen president-elect of the society during its annual meeting last week in Atlantic City, N.J. He was selected by ballot of the members, who are leaders in academic medicine and research.

He will take office next May for a one-year term as head of the organization, succeeding another University of Texas scientist, Dr. Laurence Earley. Dr. Earley is professor and chairman of medicine at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Dr. Fordtran will be the second professor-scientist from Southwestern to achieve this post, a signal honor among the nation's scientific community. Dr. Donald W. Seldin, professor and chairman of internal medicine at the Dallas school, was the society's president in 1966.

Further indication of Southwestern's eminence nationally in clinical teaching and research is the fact that the Journal of Clinical Investigation, foremost among national medical journals, has its editorial offices on the Dallas campus with Dr. Jean D. Wilson, also a professor of internal medicine, as editor. Several faculty members, including Dr. Fordtran, are members of its editorial board.

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The journal is the official publication of the American Society for Clinical Investigation.

Dr. Fordtran has been recognized for his contributions in three research areas in gastroenterology: tracing causes and improved treatment of peptic ulcer, intestinal processes leading to diarrheal disease, and the effects of mineral absorption on such problems as kidney stones, renal failure and bone disease.

He is co-author with Dr. Marvin Sleisenger of San Francisco of "Gastrointestinal Disease," a definitive book published in 1973 which has become a standard medical text and reference work for physicians. The Dallas scientist also has published some 50 papers describing his clinical studies.

Dr. Fordtran's basic research has helped lay groundwork for improved clinical treatment of cholera, an epidemic diarrheal disease in underdeveloped parts of the world, through use of special glucose solutions taken orally. This technique, made possible by improved understanding of complex intestinal functions, replaces more difficult-to-administer intravenous injections in treating cholera.

In 1971, Dr. Fordtran won the Distinguished Achievement Award of the American Gastroenterological Association for his findings in intestinal absorption and secretion processes and their relationship to severe diarrheal disease.

Other current research by Dr. Fordtran and his associates has defined factors causing peptic ulcer and helped establish improved treatment methods, using an experimental drug which blocks effects of histamine--a hormone-like substance which has been found to trigger excessive stomach acid secretion.

Southwestern's gastroenterology laboratories have pioneered in devising new methods for measuring acid secretion in humans. Procedures and apparatus designed by Dallas researchers led by Dr. Fordtran have helped spur new progress in pinpointing causes of ulcers.

Other studies are shedding new light on defects in the intestine's ability to absorb calcium and magnesium, and how these defects contribute to distress and disease.

A Southwestern faculty member for 13 years, Dr. Fordtran has held a professorship in internal medicine since 1969. The 43-year-old San Antonio native received his M.D. degree from Tulane Medical School in 1956, and served internships and residencies in Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas.

He also served with the U.S. Public Health Service from 1958 to 1960, including a year with the Division of Indian Health in Arizona. After two years as a research fellow in gastroenterology at Boston's Massachusetts Memorial Hospital, he joined the internal medicine faculty at UT Southwestern.

Dr. Fordtran has been a member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation since 1965. Membership in the society is accorded in recognition of distinguished achievement in medical research. As its president-elect, Dr. Fordtran will serve on the executive committee and take an active policy role prior to assuming the presidency in 1976.