



In Memoriam

Dr. Apt helped prevent childhood blindness



Dr. Apt

The first physician to become board-certified in pediatrics and ophthalmology, **Leonard Apt, M.D., FAAP**, of Los Angeles, died Feb. 1 at age 90.

Dr. Apt devoted his career to research on the prevention of childhood blindness. His work with colleagues at University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) led to the discovery that povidone iodine is a safer and more effective topical antimicrobial agent for sterilizing the surface of the eye before surgery than silver nitrate, and that it is effective against keratitis. Dr. Apt developed a diagnostic test, the Apt test, to distinguish between maternal and fetal blood after birth. He also developed a method to predict allergy to catgut and collagen sutures, determined a formula to ensure the eyes' proper position during anesthesia, and created a wax for thread used in surgical sutures.

His accomplishments inspired the establishment

of the AAP Leonard Apt Lectureship in 2000 to recognize experts in fields relevant to understanding disease processes and/or treatment in pediatric ophthalmology patients. Dr. Apt also received the AAP Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000. He was a member of the AAP Sections on Ophthalmology, Senior Members and Surgery.

Dr. Apt earned his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, and trained in pediatrics, pathology and ophthalmology at Harvard University, the University of Cincinnati and the National Institutes of Health. In 1961, he joined the staff at UCLA, where he remained active until his death. Dr. Apt was founding director of the Division of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus at the Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA, where he endowed the Leonard Apt Professorship and Fellowship in Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus.

—*Trisha Koriath*