

Obituary

Herbert Homerus Dedo MD, Professor Emeritus, San Francisco

* March 20, 1933

† August 05, 2021



1958	Graduation in Medicine at UCSF Medical School, San Francisco
1959 - 1963	Intern and resident at USCF Medical Center, San Francisco, graduation in ENT
1964 - 1966	Fellowship from the National Institute of Health, including one year in Hamburg, Germany, at the Physiological Institute with Erich Dunker, specialization in throat physiology and surgery
1966	Assistant professor at USCF Medical Center, San Francisco
1971 - 1991	Vice Chairman of the Medical Center, San Francisco
1982 - 2006	Professor of Otolaryngology
2010	Retirement

Herbert Dedo became one of the world's leading specialists in treating throat and larynx diseases and was a pioneer in the field of phonosurgery and the use of the microscope and the CO₂-laser, for instance in the treatment of laryngeal papillomatosis. Spasmodic Dysphonia has had continued to pose a challenge to all therapeutic efforts, with heated controversial debate for a whole century, until Herbert Dedo (1976) caused a great sensation by a spectacular action: He cut, deliberately, an unhurt, intact recurrent nerve, and very successfully so. He studied antique surgical instruments and designed more than 20 new ENT surgical instruments including the Dedo laryngoscope. Over 100 peer reviewed papers, two books and several book chapters reflect his scientific activity, and his big atlas "Surgery of the Larynx and Trachea" (1990; 439 pages, 265 figures, many of them multi-part, colored hand-drawings, excellently done and highly instructive) became a standard operating manual for throat surgeons worldwide. He gave over 200 invited lectures and was guest of honor of the National Otolaryngology Societies of Australia in 1986, Brazil in 1992, and Sweden in 1993. In 1970 he was awarded the prestigious Harris P. Mosher award.

Herbert Dedo loved to travel the world and had many interests, in particular the fine arts and music (played the organ as well as the bagpipe), and he spent a lot of time and effort to explore the roots of his German family. He would have loved to trace them back to the Counts Dedo of Mansfeld from the 11th and 12th century, but obviously, the relevant sources had vanished during the 30 years' war, and the dream of a noble lineage did not come true.

Don't worry, dear Herb. All your friends will remember you as a noble and gentle person, and even more, as an always thoroughly faithful friend. Thank you for having been with us. Our thoughts are with your family.

Now, rest in peace.

Juergen Wendler, Berlin