

# Seymour Harold Rinzler

*May 19, 1914 — May 20, 1970*

It is a great irony that Dr. Seymour Harold Rinzler died from the very disease he had studied and researched his entire professional life, namely, coronary artery disease. His desire was to prevent the occurrence of that disease. By reducing saturated fatty acid intake and substituting unsaturated fatty acids, he and his associates were able to demonstrate increased longevity due to diminution of coronary disease.

Born in New York City, Dr. Rinzler received the B.S. degree from Cornell University in 1934 and his M.D. from New York University College of Medicine in 1938. He served his internship in the Third Medical Division (NYU) Bellevue Hospital, New York (1940-41). His postgraduate training included a year (1939) in the Department of Metabolism, New York University College of Medicine, and a year (1941) in the Department of Pharmacology, Cornell University Medical College. He entered military service in 1942 and was assigned to the European theater of operations; he was discharged with the rank of major.

Dr. Rinzler held the following appointments: clinical assistant professor of medicine, Cornell University Medical College; attending physician, Beth Israel Medical Center, New York; physician in charge-Adult Cardiac Clinic, Beth Israel Hospital, New York; assistant visiting physician Second (Cornell) Division, Bellevue Hospital; assistant visiting physician, New York Hospital; Josiah Macy Fellow, Department of Pharmacology, Cornell University Medical College (under the tutelage of Dr. Harry Gold, 1952-58); cardiologist in charge, Diet and Coronary Heart Disease Study Project, Bureau of Nutrition, Department of Health, City of New York (1958-67); and director, Bureau of Nutrition, Department of Health, City of New York (1967-70).

He obtained his specialty boards in internal medicine as well as his subspecialty boards in cardiology. He was a fellow of the American College of Physicians, New York Academy of Medicine, Council on Clinical Cardiology, American Heart Association, and New York Academy of Sciences. In addition, he was a member of the New York Heart Association, American Federation for Clinical Research, Sigma Xi, Alpha Omega Alpha, Harvey Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Therapeutic Society, American Society for the Study of Arteriosclerosis, Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, American College of Clinical Pharmacology, and the American Public Health Association. He had been a member of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics since 1951.

Dr. Rinzler published over seventy articles on arteriosclerosis and coronary artery disease and was the author of two books, *Cardiac Pain* (1951) and *Clinical Aspects of Arteriosclerosis* (1957). At the time of his death, he had just completed a chapter for *Diet in Arteriosclerosis*, edited by S. G. Schettler and G. S. Boyd (Elsevier Publishing Co., New York, 1969).

The last twelve years of his life were devoted to the study of diet and its relation to coronary artery disease. He and the late Norman Joliffe organized the first large pilot study with sufficient controls to determine the effect of using low saturated fat, high unsaturated fat diet on the prevention of coronary artery disease. As chief of that study and then head of the Bureau of Nutrition of the City of New York, he was able to reveal the long-range preventive aspects of that diet on the disease. Although his work was far from finished at his death, the studies in which he participated are ongoing and the influence of his research will continue to provide them with momentum.

In 1938 he married Rita Bernard. They had two children, Lois and Robert. His wife died in 1968 and he married Mrs. Beatrice Lassoff in October 1969.

*Maurice Goodgold, M.D.*