

Jörg-Friedrich Vollmar, M.D., Professor em. of Surgery, University Ulm, Mastery in Vascular Surgery

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Jörg Vollmar, MD, Professor of Surgery, was one of the leading vascular surgeons in Germany of his time with international reputation. Dr. Vollmar—born on 22 September 1923—became his professional focus to the world of medicine by his father who was a non-surgeon, specializing in internal medicine. For his medical education, which he took between 1942 and 1944 at the University in Berlin and Würzburg, he completed the basic medical training after an interruption caused by WW II at the University of Heidelberg (1945–1948).

After the decision for surgery, mentored by Professor K.H. Bauer, the chairman of the Department of Surgery at the University of Heidelberg, Dr. Vollmar obtained a postgraduate training in General Surgery and in different specialities such as Traumatology, Pediatric Surgery, Urology, Thorax, and Cardiovascular Surgery. He was trained also in Switzerland, Kantonspital St. Gallen (1953/1954), in the field of Trauma and Pediatric Surgery.

Since 1958, during the second period of his residency, he developed major interest in vascular surgery, guided by Prof. F. Linder, Heidelberg. The surgical focus of F. Linder for cardiac and vascular surgery occupied Dr. Vollmar completely, resulting in an intensive scientific and clinical work in surgery and diagnostic methods of arteriosclerosis. After finishing his residency, Dr. Vollmar dedicated his work to vascular surgery, continuing with studies in the USA (Houston Texas Heart Institute/M. DeBakey, San Francisco/K. Wylie, Los Angeles/Longmire and Cannon)

and the UK (St. Mary's and Brompton Hospital in London/Sir Rob, Sir Brock, Sir Prince).

Sir Charles Rob, one of Britain's foremost surgeons (University of London and St. Mary's Hospital), taught Vollmar the use of nylon prostheses for surgery of aortic aneurysm. During the period in the Brompton Clinic in London, Dr. Vollmar was experiencing the leading work of Dr. Brock and Dr. Prince also in Thoracic Surgery.

In 1962, Dr. Vollmar promoted a scientific work about prosthetic substitution of arteries and took over the Leadership of the section of Vascular Surgery as a senior physician of the Department of Surgery at the University of Heidelberg. International cooperations with surgeons and hospitals in many European and non-European countries and his friendship with M. DeBakey promoted him to an international reputation as a vascular surgeon. In 1970, Dr. Vollmar was appointed Head of the Surgical Chair with the main focus of vascular and thoracic surgery at the University of Ulm. In the following 21 years, he got the position of the leading vascular surgeon in Germany through his excellence in surgical praxis and as a teacher of many young vascular surgeons. The results of his research in vascular and thoracic surgery including his special experience in human renal transplantation contributed strongly to the development of the specialty Vascular Surgery in Germany.

The major focus of his scientific work during the period of his residency in the Department of Surgery at the University of Heidelberg was research and development of techniques for blood transfusion, resulting in the establishment of one of the first blood transfusion centers in Germany. His work about artificial blood vessels resulted in the use of prosthetic substitutes for surgical treatment of arteriosclerotic arteries. He spent major parts of his clinical research activities in transplantation of organs, in particular kidney transplantation, and limb retransplantation techniques.

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In cooperation with the German Society of Neurology, he introduced a new clinical staging for acute and chronic brain ischemia (stages I–IV; *Fortschr Med.* 1966).

In Heidelberg, Dr. Vollmar modified the ring stripping of arteriosclerotic desobliterated arteries and the use of temporary arteriovenous fistula after venous thrombectomy. In Ulm, he was successful in introducing the technique of vascular endoscopy and a new operating method of the venous inguinal crossover bypass with prosthetic artificial vessels in the case of unilateral iliac venous obstruction.

After his appointment as Chairman of the Department of Vascular and Thoracic Surgery at the University of Ulm, he continued his specific work in vascular surgery with a development of a new classification of vascular malformations; he also successfully introduced a special technique of vascular arterial dissection technique in angiodyplasias. Major scientific publications were concerned with the use of artificial arteries, prosthetic substitution of arteries and veins, perigraft inflammatory reactions, management of traumatic aortic rupture, angiodyplasia, and inflammatory aortic aneurysms (*Langenbecks Arch. klin. Chir.* 1961; *Endoscopy* 1969; *J. Cardiovasc. Surg.* 1976 and 1987; *Langenbecks Arch. Chir.* 1987).

As a consequence of his successful work as a vascular surgeon and his effective research work, he was awarded within Germany and abroad: Orden do merito angiologica René Fontaine, Brazil, 1983, Erich-Lexer Award of the German Society of Surgery, 1979, René-Leriche Award, Lisboa, Portugal, 1995

Dr. Vollmar became one of the international, in Europe, leading vascular surgeons. He has been awarded with the following honorary memberships of medical societies (South American Societies; Colombia 1972, Brazil 1972, Peru 1974, and Chile 1974), Union International d'Angiologie Société Française d'Angiologie et d'Histopathologie 1977, Italian Society of Surgery (Langobardian, 1977), Society of Angiology of Finnland, 1978, Surgical Research Society of Honduras, 1976, Surgical Research Society of Southern Africa, 1978, Honorary member of the German Society of Angiology, 1985, Austrian Society for Vascular Surgery, 1987, German Society for Vascular Surgery, 1992, European Society for Cardiovascular Surgery (2002).

Due to his achievement in Vascular Surgery, he was, between 1986 and 1988, appointed President of the European Society of Cardiovascular Surgery.

His book, *Reconstructive Surgery of Arteries*, was printed for the first time in 1967 and had seven editions in German, English, Italian, and Spanish. This book is still today a guideline for Vascular Surgeons. Dr. Vollmar

published during his career 560 peer-reviewed papers in European and International Journals. He was an invited lecturer in almost all national and international institutions with a focus on vascular surgery.

Besides his work as an outstanding vascular surgeon and a surgical scientist, he spent a long-lasting activity in his profession of vascular surgery and angiology. Beginning his period as a vascular surgeon, at the University of Heidelberg, he started cooperation with the Max-Ratschow-Clinic in Darmstadt, Germany to found an interdisciplinary cooperation between vascular surgeons and Angiomedicine. Dr. Vollmar was committed to, and instrumental in, the establishment of an independent section for vascular surgery in the German Society of Surgery. After founding the vascular society, he was the Chairman between 1977 and 1984. In this society, he played an important role in establishing the specialized area of vascular surgery in Universities and Community Hospitals in Germany; he was one of the most effective advocates for the foundation of the special discipline of Angiology in hospitals. In the Ulm period, he founded a close cooperation between Vascular Surgery and Angiology. In 1974, during the Congress for Angiology in Ulm, he called off the establishment of Centres for Angiology and Vascular Surgery in University Hospitals. It was his far-reaching and ambitious vision for founding certified centers of Vascular Surgery in Germany, which has since become reality. Dr. Vollmar passed away in Ulm/Germany, his adopted city, on 15th January 2008 at the age of 84.



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