

ERICH URBACH (1893-1946) AND THE MEDICAL EPONYMS WHICH BEAR HIS NAME

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Erich Urbach (1893-1946) is an Austrian-American dermatologist and allergy specialist [1-3] (Fig. 1). He made great contributions and publications in medicine and there were many medical conditions named after him. Table I shows listed these eponyms.

Urbach was born on 29 July 1893, in Prague. He graduated from the University of Vienna under Wilhelm Kerl (1880-1945) in 1919 [1-3].

He worked at the Breslau skin clinic under Josef Jadassohn, and at the skin department of the Vienna Rothschild hospital under Hans Königstein. In 1929, he was habilitated (achieved the highest academic qualification) for skin and venereal diseases at the University of Vienna, becoming Dozent. He was subsequently an assistant physician at the II skin clinic with Wilhelm Kerl [1-3].

He migrated to USA in 1938 to become an associate in dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1939, he was Chief of the allergy department of the Jewish Hospital, Philadelphia [1-3]. He died in 1946, from coronary thrombosis.

From, Table I, one can see that, the name of Erich Urbach, were linked to different medical conditions. However, all of these eponyms faded with time and being replaced by other terms. The eponyms linked to his name are no longer used in the current medical literature. Nevertheless, many dermatologists remember „Urbach”, because of the synonym for Lipoid proteinosis; „Urbach-Wiethe disease”, which is sometimes used to refer to this disease.

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Figure 1. Erich Urbach (1893-1946).
Courtesy, National Library of Medicine

The eponym	Remarks
Extracellular cholesterinosis of Kerl-Urbach	Historically, this used to be a variant of Erythema Elevatum Diutinum [4,5]; the other variant is "Crocker-Williams Type" [6].
Oppenheim-Urbach disease	Also called "Oppenheim-Urbach syndrome", and "Urbach's syndrome". This was a name for necrobiosis lipoidica diabetorum [7-10]. Moriz Oppenheim (1876-1949), is an Austrian dermatologist.
Urbach-Königstein technique	Also called, "Urbach-Königstein method or reaction". It is a diagnostic procedure for demonstrating antibodies in allergies [11]. Allergen administered percutaneous, cutaneous or intracutaneous causes a local reaction, which will develop into a blister when a cantharidal dressing is placed on it. Hans Königstein (1878-1954) is an Austrian physician.
Urbach-Wiethe disease	Also called "Rössle-Urbach-Wiethe syndrome" [12,13]. But the name is Lipoid proteinosis. It is rare autosomal recessive genodermatosis, characterized by the deposition of hyaline material in the skin and mucosa, causing generalized thickening and scarring (hyalinosis cutis et mucosae) [1]. Camillo Wiethe (1888-1949), is an Austrian otologist. Robert Rössle (1876-1956), is a German pathologist.

Table I. Medical eponyms named after Erich Urbach