

**Aziz SANCAR, MD, PhD***Sarah Graham Kenan Professor**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), USA*

A Turkish Muslim Nobel Laureate in biochemistry for 2015. Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar is the fourth Muslim scientist who awarded nobel prize for 2015 with two scientists (Tomas Lindahl ve Paul Modrich) for their studies on the DNA repair.

Aziz Sancar is a Turkish and American biochemist and molecular biologist specializing in DNA repair, cell cycle checkpoints, and the circadian clock. In 2015, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry along withTomas Lindahl and Paul L. Modrich for their mechanistic studies of DNA repair.

He is Sarah Graham Kenan Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. He was born in Savur-Mardin, Turkey in 1946. He obtained his primary and secondary education in Savur and Mardin and received an M.D. degree in 1969 from Istanbul University School of Medicine.

After practicing medicine in Savur for two years he attended the University of Texas at Dallas and obtained a Ph.D. degree in Molecular Biology in 1977 with his work on a DNA repair enzyme called 'photolyase.' Dr. Sancar conducted postdoctoral work at Yale University on another DNA repair enzyme called 'excinuclease' in the period 1977-1982. He joined the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at UNC as an Associate Professor where he rose through the ranks to his current position in 1997. Dr. Sancar is currently conducting research on DNA Repair, Cell Cycle Checkpoints, Cryptochrome and the Circadian Clock. He has published 279 research articles and 32 book chapters. He is a recipient of the Presidential young Investigator Award (USA), the American Society for Photobiology Research Award, the Turkish Scientific and Technical Council (TUBITAK) Scientific Achievement Award, and the North Carolina Distinguished Chemist Award. He is a Fellow of the Third World Academy of Sciences, a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Member of the American Academy for Microbiology, a Member of the National Academy of Sciences, USA, and honorary member of the Turkish Academy of Sciences.

His longest-running study has involved photolyase and the mechanisms of photo-reactivation. In his inaugural article in the PNAS, Sancar captures the elusive photolyase radicals he has chased for nearly 20 years, thus providing direct observation of the photocycle for thymine dimer repair.

He is married to Gwen Boles Sancar, who is also a Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Together, they founded Carolina Turk Evi, a permanent Turkish Center in close proximity to the campus of UNC-CH, which provides graduate housing for Turkish researchers at UNC-CH, short term guest services for Turkish visiting scholars, and a center for promoting Turkish-American interchange.

We wish more Muslim scientists will be awarded Nobel Prize in near future.

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