

Prof. Zelig Eshhar – CV

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Born in Israel in 1941, Prof. Zelig Eshhar earned his BSc (1963) and MSc (1966) degrees in Biology at the Hebrew University. His doctoral research (1968-1972) was jointly supervised by Prof David Givol and Prof Michael Sela in the Department of Chemical Immunology at the Weizmann Institute of Science, with post-doctoral research at Harvard Medical School under Prof. Baruj Benacerraf. In 1973, he returned to the Weizmann Institute Department of Chemical Immunology as Scientist, and subsequently as tenured Professor. Currently, Prof Eshhar serves as Prof Emeritus at the Weizmann Institute, and since 2012, as Chairman of Immunology Research at Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center.

Prof Eshhar's findings enabled the genetic modification of "killer" T lymphocytes by arming them with designed chimeric receptors exhibiting antibody-type specificity (currently known as chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cells). CAR combines the antibody's unique ability to recognize a defined antigen (e.g. tumor antigens) with T cell receptor activation motifs. Eshhar's team was the first to employ the CAR -T cells to specifically fight cancer. One such CAR recently received regulatory approval.

Prof Eshhar is the recipient of numerous awards, most recently the most prestigious Israel Prize in the Life Sciences (2015), the Novartis Prize for Clinical Immunology (2016) and the EMET Prize in the Life Sciences (2017).

Prof Eshhar has published 215 peer reviewed scientific papers in top scientific Journals.