**Biography- Louis J Ignarro**

 A native of Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Ignarro studied undergraduate pharmacology and pharmacy at Columbia University (1958-1962) before earning his doctorate in Pharmacology at the University of Minnesota (1966). In 1968, he completed a postdoctoral fellowship in chemical pharmacology at the National Institutes of Health. Upon completing his fellowship, Dr. Ignarro was recruited by Ciba-Geigy Pharmaceuticals in NY to lead the company’s biochemical and anti-inflammatory program. His work led to the development and marketing of diclofenac (VoltarenR). In 1973, he left the drug industry to pursue a career in academia.

As a professor with the Tulane University School of Medicine, Dr. Ignarro began his basic research into nitric oxide and its relationship with the cyclic nucleotide cyclic GMP. He later joined the faculty at the UCLA School of Medicine in 1985 to continue his basic research on nitric oxide and cyclic GMP. In 1993, Dr. Ignarro became Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology at UCLA School of Medicine, where he currently serves as professor emeritus in the Department of Molecular and Medical Pharmacology. At UCLA, he has excelled as both a research scientist and a professor, winning eleven consecutive Golden Apple teaching awards from his medical students.

His numerous discoveries, including that nitric oxide relaxes vascular smooth muscle, is responsible for the mechanism of action of nitroglycerin, is biosynthesized in mammalian cells, and is responsible for erectile function have led to significant advancements in cardiovascular science and the understanding of heart disease. His pivotal discovery that nitric oxide is the neurotransmitter responsible for penile erection and sexual arousal led to the development of sildenafil or ViagraR.

Dr. Ignarro was awarded the 1998 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, along with Robert F. Furchgott and Ferid Murad, “for their discovery that nitric oxide acts as a signaling molecule in the cardiovascular system”. He also has received the American Heart Association’s Basic Research Prize and Distinguished Scientist Award “for the advancement of cardiovascular science”, the Roussel UCLAF Prize in France “for cell communication and signaling”, the CIBA Award for Hypertension Research, the Canadian Medal of Merit, and the Golden Plate Award “for outstanding contributions in cardiovascular research”.

 A prolific scholar, Dr. Ignarro has published numerous articles and books. He is the founder of the Nitric Oxide Society and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society. He also is well known as a Nutritional Advisory board member for Herbalife International, a global nutrition and weight-management company. Dr. Louis J. Ignarro has devoted his life’s work to advancing heart health around the world.