



Distinguished Alumnus

Philip A. Wolf, MD '60

Philip A. Wolf, MD '60, professor emeritus of neurology at Boston University School of Medicine, dedicated his career to researching the epidemiology of stroke and dementia. Over five decades, he studied cardiovascular diseases across three generations of New Englanders as part of the Framingham Heart Study, serving as the study's principal investigator from 1989 until 2014. He was the first, and for many years, the only neurologist on the project.

Born in the Bronx, Wolf graduated from high school at 16 and was the first in his family to attend college. As a student at Upstate Medical University, he became interested in neurology through two influential faculty members, David Whitlock, MD, PhD, who taught neuroanatomy, and Peter Duffy, MD, a neuropathologist.

To make ends meet, Dr. Wolf had several part-time jobs, serving as an extern at St. Joseph's Hospital and a night job at Crouse Irving helping to deliver babies.

Wolf received his medical degree, cum laude and was elected to AOA. Following medical internship at Boston City Hospital, he trained in epidemiology at the University of Pennsylvania, in medicine at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, and in neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital.

He joined the faculty of Boston University School of Medicine in 1969, where he attained the rank of professor of neurology, research professor of medicine at Boston University School of Medicine, and professor of public Health (epidemiology and biostatistics) at Boston University School of Public Health.



The Massachusetts General Hospital neurology faculty in 1965. Wolf, a resident, is pictured in the second row from top, second from the left.

Wolf's research identified risk factors for cardiovascular diseases, including stroke. He was co-author of a landmark paper published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1970 that was among the first to clearly establish blood pressure as a risk factor for stroke. His research has also showed that hypertension, obesity, smoking, diabetes, and physical inactivity are risk factors not only for stroke, but for cognitive decline and dementia, as well.

In addition to his role on the Framingham Study, Wolf for many years was also chief of the Cerebrovascular Disease Section of the Department of Neurology at Boston University School of Medicine. He helped direct a number of international coop-

erative clinical studies of stroke: the NINDS Stroke Data Bank, the Ticlopidine-Aspirin Stroke Study, Boston Area Anticoagulation Trial in Atrial Fibrillation, North American Symptomatic Carotid Endarterectomy Trial, and the Clopidogrel-Aspirin Prevention of Ischemic Events Study. In 1981, he became PI of NINDS R01, Precursors of Stroke Incidence and Prognosis, which was repeatedly funded up to the time he retired and continues today. Wolf was also principal investigator of the MRI, Genetics and Cognitive Precursors of Alzheimer's Disease Study, and in 1989, a National Institute on Aging-supported Epidemiology of Dementia Study, both NIH-funded research programs.

Wolf has received many honors



during his career. In 1992, he was selected by the National Advisory Neurological Disorders and Stroke Council to receive a Jacob A. Javits Neuroscience Investigator Award and was the first to receive the Humana Award for Excellence in Clinical Stroke by the Stroke Council of the American Heart Association. He also received the Mihara Cerebrovascular Disorder Research Fund Mihara Award of the International Stroke Society in 1996 and the Paul Dudley White Award from the American Heart

Association in 2017. He received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Upstate Medical University in 2010.

Wolf is a Fellow of the American Heart Association, delivered the Connor Lecture in 1992, and received the Distinguished Scientist award in 2006. He is a fellow of the American Neurological Association; the American Academy of Neurology; and the American Epidemiological Society. He has published on a range of neurological and cardiovascular epidemiological topics, authoring

or co-authoring over 350 refereed articles, as well as book chapters, and abstracts.

Wolf and wife Barbara have been married since 1968 and have two children and seven grandchildren. They spend their winters in Florida and summers on Cape Cod. Wolf enjoys sailing and running and is proud to have completed nine marathons (including two New York City marathons and five Boston marathons).



In addition to his wife of 52 years, Wolf says he gets great joy from his son, daughter, and his seven grandchildren, pictured at the b'nai mitzvot of twin grandsons Ethan and Sam in March 2019.