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William H. Beierwaltes: Pioneer in Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging

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A Leader in Development of Thyroid Cancer Therapy with Radioiodine

- Dr. Beierwaltes was a pioneer in the use of radioiodine (131-I) for thyroid disease.
- He was among the first to use radioiodine for the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid cancer and became a national authority for this technique.
- The treatment of thyroid cancer with 131-I was widely adopted following the 1957 publication of “Clinical Use of Radios isotopes” the first book on clinical nuclear medicine practice, co-authored by Dr. Beierwaltes.
- 131-I therapy has stood the test of time for over 50 years and remains the standard of care worldwide.

A Founder of Molecular Imaging

- The radiopharmaceuticals developed under Dr. Beierwaltes’ leadership are among the first molecular imaging agents to visualize biologic processes at the cellular and subcellular levels.
- His success in grant funding led to a variety of projects, facilities and infrastructure that fueled the rapid advancement of nuclear medicine research at the University of Michigan. A National Institutes of Health grant provided the initial funding for U-M’s PET center and medical cyclotron.
- Dr. Beierwaltes was a prolific author of a large number of important publications. He wrote or coauthored more than 300 scientific papers, 4 books, and 77 book chapters.

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- Dr. Beierwaltes organized one of the first university programs for nuclear medicine training.
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Molecular Imaging & Nuclear Medicine

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