

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **José M Mato receives the prestigious "XLIII Jiménez Díaz Memorial Lecture" award for his scientific career**

- *The award was granted by the Conchita Rábado de Jiménez Díaz Foundation, an institution in which Professor Mato began his scientific activity 40 years ago.*
- *Nobel Prizes such as Hans A. Krebs, Arthur Kornberg, Luc Montagnier, or renowned scientists such as Joan Massagué, Margarita Salas or Craig Venter, have been some of the awarders in the 43 editions of this award.*
- *Professor Severo Ochoa was the first one awarded in 1969.*

(Bilbao, 4th May 2011).-Professor José M Mato, general director of the Basque research centres CIC bioGUNE and CIC biomaGUNE, has been awarded the "XLIII Jiménez Díaz Memorial Lecture" for his scientific career. An acknowledgement granted by the [Conchita Rábago de Jiménez Díaz](#) Foundation since said awards were established in 1969.

The award ceremony will be held on 19<sup>th</sup> May in the headquarters of the Conchita Rábago de Jiménez Díaz Foundation in Madrid, after a Symposium entitled "Metabolism and Illness", to be followed by Professor Mato's lecture on "Metabolism, metabolomics and the discovery of new biomarkers and medicine".

This award has achieved great international relevance in the scientific community since it awarded, in its first edition in 1969, the eminent Spanish scientist Severo Ochoa. In the remaining 42 editions, we can find among the awarders some of the most relevant scientist as, among others, Nobel Prizes Hans A. Krebs, Arthur Kornberg, Luc Montagnier, or renowned scientists such as Joan Massagué, Margarita Salas or Craig Venter.

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*"It is a pleasure and an honour that the institution where I began my scientific training over 40 years ago has granted me this prestigious award. My professional career began in the laboratory of Manuel Serrano Ríos, a room of around 30 square metres located in department of Metabolism, Nutrition and Hormones of the Jiménez Díaz Foundation. My time at the Foundation was an unforgettable experience. I was lucky to meet people who have meant a lot to me, both intellectually and personally", states Professor José M Mato.*

### **□ Professor José M Mato**

Professor José M Mato (Madrid, 1949) studied Chemistry at the University of Madrid and obtained a PhD at the University of Leiden. He carried out his professional activity in the Jiménez Díaz Foundation, the Biozentrum of the University of Basel, Chapel Hill University in North Carolina, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Pennsylvania University and Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, the Spanish Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) and the University of Navarra.

He was president of CSIC (1992-96) and is currently general director of CIC bioGUNE (Bilbao) and CIC biomaGUNE (San Sebastian). In 2004 he was awarded the Gregorio Marañón National Medical Research Award for his studies on the interrelation between the metabolism of methionine, fatty liver and hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC).

His research work lead him to identify a group of genes involved in the synthesis and catabolism of S-Adenosyl methionine (SAME, a metabolite of methionine) and to outline its function during the accumulation of fat in the liver and the development of HCC, as well as in other, normal processes such as hepatic regeneration and differentiation. The metabolism of methionine is currently considered as a therapeutic target and SAME is used in treating different hepatic illnesses.

José M Mato is the author of more than two hundred and forty publications and holds several patents. His work has been acknowledged with different awards, among which we must highlight the CJ Kok award for excellence in a doctoral thesis of the University of Leiden (1979), the GB Morgagni medal for research in the area of diabetes and metabolic illnesses (1989) and the international prize for excellence in biomedical research, Lennox K. Black, of Thomas Jefferson University (1994).

He has participated in creating several companies, including OWL Genomics, a biotechnological company based on metabolomics with pioneering applications in the early diagnosis of hepatic illnesses, founded in 2003.

### **□ Professor Carlos Jiménez Díaz**

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Professor Carlos Jiménez Díaz (1898-1967) was something more than the most outstanding Spanish doctor of the 20th century. He was the person who closed a cycle of a scarcely scientific and dogmatic medicine and began the new era of its modernisation and bringing it closer to the new global medicine in its aspects of care, teaching and research.

He was undoubtedly the last great total practitioner, "knower of all knowledge" Laín Entralgo called him. In these three aspects he covered all of the medicine that had emerged at the time, and contributed an immunosuppressive treatment with nitrogen mustard, prior to using steroids, in what he called illnesses due to *autoplasmonocividad*, now autoimmune".

He defended theory and carried out experimental work on the importance of the role of the secretion of active substances by vascular endothelium, in hypertension, he revolutionised the concept of allergy, he performed the second cardiac catheterisation in the world and he was the only Spanish doctor to achieve the honour of chairing two international societies: the Internal Medicine Society and the Allergy Society.

In Spain, he created the first Medical Research Institute that allowed for a full dedication to this task in its basic and clinical aspects and, subsequently, after the tragic interruption of the Civil War, in which he had to start from scratch, he achieved his dream of a "Total Centre", which combined all aspects: **The Clínica de la Concepción**, later in his honour **Jiménez Díaz Foundation** that began a productive stage in the transformation of the old concept of Hospital into a place of science, developing all the specialities with its own services, of which the majority were pioneering in the country.

There he also modernised teaching both for students and postgraduates, taking the first steps in regulated specialisation for new graduates. His teaching entailed a true practice, at the bedside of the patients and integrated without theorising the subjects separately, but tackling them himself or the appropriate people according to their different nuances.