

PRÉCIS



David M. Morens is Senior Advisor to the Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health.

He received the A.B. degree (Psychology) in 1969 and the M.D. degree in 1973, both from the University of Michigan.

He is Board Certified in Pediatrics (1978) and Preventive Medicine (1980), with fellowship training in pediatric infectious diseases and additional training in virology, and is a Fellow of the Infectious Disease Society of America and the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

1976-1982.

Dr. Morens served as a United States Public Health Service officer in CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service from 1976-1978; served as virologist in CDC's Bureau of Laboratories, including two years studying Lassa fever in Sierra Leone, West Africa; served as Chief of CDC's Respiratory & Special Pathogens Branch; and during these years also served as Assistant Professor at Atlanta's Emory University and Attending Physician in pediatrics at Atlanta's Grady Memorial Hospital.

At CDC, Dr. Morens set up national disease surveillance systems for Reye syndrome and for Kawasaki disease, and developed a career interest in emerging infectious diseases, including work on the first Ebola epidemic (1976), the “swine flu” epidemic (1976), the Legionnaire disease epidemic (1976), the Caribbean dengue epidemics of 1976-1981, the Egyptian Rift Valley fever epidemic (1977-1978), the pandemic of acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis (1981), and gastrointestinal diseases caused by rotaviruses and noroviruses. The latter work resulted in co-discovery of the prototype Snow Mountain strain of norovirus. During his first two years at CDC, Dr. Morens directed or participated in 9 major national or international outbreak investigations; studied the epidemiology of enteroviruses including acute flaccid myelitis, and later spent a year in the laboratory studying polioviruses, related enteroviruses, and the agents of viral gastroenteritides. He spent two years studying Lassa fever in West Africa (1979-1981), including clinical trials with ribavirin and immune plasma, and epidemiologic field studies. In his final two years at CDC, Dr. Morens was

appointed the AIDS Task Force representative for the newly-created National Center for Infectious Diseases, and led the laboratory component of CDC's national AIDS case-control study.

1982-1998.

From 1982-1998 Dr. Morens served at the University of Hawai'i, in the School of Medicine as Professor of Tropical Medicine and as Professor and Chairman, Department of Family Practice & Community Health; in the School of Public Health as Professor and Chairman, Epidemiology Department; and in the College of Natural Sciences as Professor of Microbiology. During this time, he worked in patient care at Le'ahi Hospital and later at the Diamond Head Health Center, where he was CLIA-licensed laboratory director. In addition to teaching and managing doctoral programs, Dr. Morens served in the Preventive Medicine Residency program.

Throughout this time (1982-1987) Dr. Morens worked in laboratory studies of dengue viruses, including WHO-funded work in Indonesia and NIH-funded work on dengue pathogenesis, vaccine development under US Army contract, virus epitope mapping, and antibody-dependent enhancement, providing reagents to colleagues in the US and internationally. Following the deadly 1981 dengue outbreak in Cuba, Dr. Morens worked with the US State Department to send his chief laboratory technician to Cuba to transfer reagents and train Cuban government scientists in research and service virology methods. He co-developed a BHK neutralization test for flaviviruses that is widely used. He also studied Hansen's disease as well as the epidemiology of Parkinson and Alzheimer diseases.

During his years in Hawai'i, Dr. Morens conducted numerous studies throughout the Pacific islands of Micronesia and Polynesia, including programs in syndromic disease surveillance and service on the Pacific's WPRO/WHO Polio Eradication Committee. For years he conducted AIDS training in the Pacific as well as molecular epidemiologic studies of HIV in Vietnam. With the support of WHO and the Embassy of Cuba, he was among the first Americans to enter and teach in Vietnam (1985) after the war's end in 1975. During these same years Dr. Morens published numerous historical research papers on such diseases as anthrax, cholera, influenza, measles (and other exanthematous diseases), rinderpest, scarlet fever, zoster, the "Plague of Athens" (430 BC), and the death of George Washington, among many other subjects.

1998 – the present.

In 1998 Dr. Morens joined the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, where he remains on active duty in the United States Public Health Service. He continues to serve as the Senior Advisor to the Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and is also involved in Institute activities such as work in the Viral Pathogenesis and Evolution Laboratory, vaccine-associated disease, NIH history and the histories of infectious diseases such as influenza and measles, and studies of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, mechanisms of viral disease host-switching and pathogenesis, and research liaison with NASA, including the health of women astronauts.

Dr. Morens is past President of the American Epidemiological Society and past Chairman of the American Committee on Arthropod-Borne and Zoonotic Viruses. Awards include the PHS Meritorious Service and Outstanding Service Medals and many other PHS and US Army awards, as well as the Secretary of DHHS Distinguished Service Award. He has authored hundreds of scientific articles in major biomedical journals. His career interest for over 45 years has remained the study of emerging infectious diseases, and for decades has been studying viral disease pathogenesis, and the history of medicine and public health.