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Nobel Prize winners for Medicine or Physiology 2015

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2015



By [Adrienne Papp](#)

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As much as we love the [Oscars](#), the [Emmys](#), the [Grammys](#) and other entertainment award shows, the [Noble Prizes](#) have a special place in our hearts, as they are awarded to people who have made significant contributions to improving the world. Be it in economics, literature, physics, medicine, or peace, the work of Nobel Prize winners have made our world a safer, richer and healthier place.

This time we salute the Nobel Prize winners for [Medicine](#) or [Physiology](#), given to three researchers whose discoveries have sought to eradicate common scourges of third world countries and whose work has come very close to completely eliminating

them

The three, 85-year old [William C. Campbell](#), 80-year-old [Satoshi Omura](#) and 85-year-old [Youyou Tu](#), developed several [antimicrobial treatments](#) for tropical diseases that have plagued the human species since the origin of man.



Campbell, an Irish biochemist and [parasitologist](#) at [Drew University in New Jersey](#), and Omura, a bioorganic chemist at [Kitasato University in Japan](#) and [Wesleyan University in Connecticut](#), will share half the prize for their development of the drug [Avermectin](#) and the closely related drug [Ivermectin](#). These medications have been effective in of the roundworm-caused diseases [River Blindness](#) and [Lymphatic Filariasis](#), also known as [Elephantiasis](#).

Youyou Tu is associated with the [Academy of Chinese Medicine](#). Her studies led to the creation of the drug [Artemisinin](#), which has lowered mortality rates from [malaria](#), which is a threat to about half the world's population. Both types of drugs cited in the award are examples of the effectiveness of natural chemistry, isolating compounds from organisms that naturally produce them or similar molecules and had exhibited healing potential in trials. It's a case of Mother Nature providing the cure to misery-causing diseases that have run rampant in human history, once the compound has been isolated.



That's a large part of the reason these scientists have been singled out for the prestigious award. "The impact of Avermectin and Artemisinin goes far beyond reducing the disease burden of individuals," said [Hans Forsberg of the Nobel Committee](#). "By allowing children to go to school and adults to go to work, the treatment helps them to escape poverty, which also contributes to economic growth of the community. The discoveries of the [2015 Nobel Laureates](#) represent a paradigm shift in medicine, which has not only provided revolutionary therapies for patients suffering from devastating [parasitic diseases](#), but has also promoted well-being and prosperity for both individuals and society. **The global impact of their discovery and the resulting benefit to mankind is immeasurable.**"

In Japan, Omura explored the antibacterial properties of agents produced by the naturally occurring [Streptomyces microorganism](#), which lives in common soil. Campbell, an expert in parasite biology working in New Jersey, acquired Omura's cultures and conducted extensive tests of them in farm and domestic animals.



Among the most efficient killers of parasites, he discovered, was a purified version of [Avermectin](#). Chemically modified to produce [Ivermectin](#), the result was found to kill parasites in their larval stage, proving its effectiveness as an antidote to the disease. **Ivermectin's global impact on human health has been compared to that of penicillin.** It continues to be administered to some 300 million people annually.



The other half-prize winner Tu, was cited her work for the Chinese government that resulted in the discovery and development of [Artemisinin](#), the treatment for malaria. Drawn from the extract of fever-reducing plants long used in traditional medicines, Artemisinin continues to be the primary drug used in the treatment of malaria. Annually, almost half a billion doses of the drug are administered.

As head of Chinese Government's Project 523 in the 1960s, Tu and her team of researchers isolated the active ingredient that protected against the malaria [parasite](#) and developed an extraction method that allowed its therapeutic use.

After testing the extract and finding the drug to be effective in mice and monkeys, Tu and her team tested the early form of [Artemisinin](#) on themselves to establish its safety in humans. That's human drug trial testing at its most immediate.



"When it comes to translation of scientific discovery, this is one of the greatest examples of the century," said [Dyann Wirth, chair of the Department of Immunology and Infectious Diseases at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health](#) and a member of the [Alpert Foundation's scientific advisory prize committee](#). **"This is classic basic research that has resulted in a drug that saves lives."**



The [Nobel Prize](#) in Physiology or Medicine (Swedish: Nobelpriset i fysiologi eller medicin), administered by the [Nobel Foundation](#), is awarded once a year for outstanding discoveries in the fields of life sciences and medicine. It is one of five Nobel Prizes established in 1895 by [Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel](#), the inventor of [dynamite](#), in his will. Nobel was personally interested in experimental [physiology](#) and wanted to establish a prize for progress through scientific discoveries in laboratories. The Nobel Prize is presented to the recipient(s) at an annual ceremony on 10 December, the anniversary of Nobel's death, along with a diploma and a certificate for the monetary award. The front side of the medal provides the same profile of Alfred Nobel as depicted on the medals for [Physics](#), [Chemistry](#), and [Literature](#); its reverse side is unique to this medal.



About the Author of This Article: [Adrienne Papp](#) is a recognized journalist, economist and feature writer, who has written for many publications including [Savor](#), [The Westside Today Publications](#) ; such as [Beverly Hills 90210](#); [Malibu Beach](#); [Santa Monica Sun](#); [The Beverly Hills Times](#); [Brentwood News](#); [Bel-Air View](#) ; [Celebrity Society](#) ; [Celeb Staff](#) ; [It Magazine](#); [Chic Today](#); [LA2DAY](#); [West Side Today](#) among many others. She is the President and CEO of Los Angeles / New York-based publicity company, [Atlantic Publicity](#) and publishing house, [Atlantic Publisher](#). Adrienne writes about world trends, [Quantum Physics](#), entertainment and interviews celebrities, world leaders, inventors, philanthropists and entrepreneurs. She also owns [Atlantic United Films](#) that produces and finances true stories made for theatrical release or the silver screen. [Spotlight News Magazine](#) is owned by [Atlantic United, Inc.](#) [Atlantic Publicity](#) just opened a new extension to it : [PublicityLosAngeles](#). [Adrienne Papp](#) is a member of the [International Press Academy](#).



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