

A personal view of endocrinology in Chile Una visión personal de la endocrinología en Chile

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In a short historical review of the outstanding changes occurred in the whole of endocrinology and particularly in Chile over the last 60 years -with the background of an infant mortality drop from 200 per thousand in 1940 to 8 per thousand today and a mean life expectancy increase from 42 to 76 years- the author outlines major achievements in this country. He comments on the use in former days of biological tests on urine extract to measure hormones for diagnostic procedures replaced by hormone determinations in blood by radioimmunoassays; today's medication with synthetic hormones instead of opotherapeutic preparations obtained from organ extracts; the identification of new hormones, receptors and new knowledge that enables us to understand the role of neurotransmitters and neuromodulators, the interaction of neurological, endocrine and immunological systems and the involvement of stress in various diseases. Finally the description of DNA and the international cooperative project to