Derek Harold Richard Barton Encyclopedia Article

Derek Harold Richard Barton

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1918-1998

English chemist who won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1969 for his work on conformational analysis. Conformational analysis is the study of how a compound's three-dimensional shape affects its chemical properties. Barton studied the conformation, or shapes, of steroids, which are a class of compounds that includes cholesterol and many hormones. In 1958 Barton developed an efficient method for producing in the laboratory the steroid aldosterone, a hormone that helps to regulate the body's salt and water balance.