Gertrude Belle Elion Encyclopedia Article

Gertrude Belle Elion

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Contents

Gertrude Belle Elion Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Gertrude Belle Elion.....3

Gertrude Belle Elion

1918-1999

American chemist who with George H. Hitchings and Sir James Black won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1988. Elion began her career as an instructor of high school science students and nursing students. During World War II many professions experienced a shortage of workers. This shortage enabled Elion to enter into the male-dominated world of academia. Here Elion's research led to the discovery of many drug treatments for diseases such as leukemia, malaria, herpes, gout, and AIDS. Elion's drug developments also improved the field of organ transplanting.