Rodney Robert Porter Encyclopedia Article

Rodney Robert Porter

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Rodney Robert Porter

1917-1985

British biochemist who received the 1972 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, which he shared with Gerald Edelman, for research concerning the chemical structure of antibodies. Antibodies (or immunoglobulins) are proteins in the blood that help to eliminate antigens, foreign substances such as bacteria and toxins. The antibody-antigen reaction is the primary mechanism in the body's immune system. The work of Porter and Edelman contributed toward greater understanding of how the body defends itself against millions of diverse antigens.