# Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar Encyclopedia Article

## Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar

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# Contents

Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar.....3

# Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar

**1901-1995**

Indian-born American astrophysicist who was awarded the 1983 Nobel Prize for Physics for theoretical studies of the structure and evolution of stars. Chandrasekhar showed that as stars exhaust their nuclear fuel they reach a stage where they no longer generate sufficient pressure to sustain their size and gravitational collapse occurs. Chandrasekhar calculated that stars of 1.4 solar mass (the "Chandrasekhar limit") or less collapse to white dwarfs, while stars of greater mass become supernovas, typically leaving neutron stars.