Thomas Wharton Encyclopedia Article

Thomas Wharton

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Thomas Wharton

1610?-1673

British physician and Oxford professor who was one of the first physicians to study glands. In 1656 Wharton discovered the duct in the submaxillary gland (the submaxillary gland is either of the two salivary glands located inside the mouth). The duct has been subsequently named Wharton's duct. Wharton then suggested that all glands had ducts for the secretion of fluid; however, Wharton also believed that the function of the thyroid gland was to "round out the fullness of the neck."