Memorial pages

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MEMORIAL PAGES

In Memory of my dear friend: Dr Denis Creton (1948–2026)

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Dr Denis Creton

It is with profound sadness that we pay tribute to the Life and Legacy of Dr Denis Creton, an outstanding French vascular surgeon, a pioneer of modern venous surgery and a man of modern vision for phlebology.

Dr Creton was a distinguished member of the international phlebological community, who passed away in Nancy on September 1st, 2026, at the age of 78.

With his passing, the world of venous medicine has lost not only an exceptional surgeon, but also a visionary clinician whose dedication, intellectual curiosity, and commitment to surgical excellence helped shape the evolution of modern phlebology and varicose vein surgery.

Throughout his career, Denis Creton embodied the finest traditions of French surgery: scientific rigor, technical precision, clinical innovation, scientific publications and, above all, an unwavering commitment to the well-being of his patients.

With a distinguished surgical career trained at the faculty of medicine of Nancy, Denis Creton distinguished himself early in his medical career. As laureate of the Faculty of Medicine, he subsequently served as Resident, Assistant, and Chief Resident in the hospitals of Nancy. These formative years provided the foundations of a profound understanding of vascular anatomy, physiology and surgical practice.

At the Clinique Ambroise Paré in Nancy, he developed a highly specialised practice devoted to venous disease, becoming widely recognized for his expertise in varicose vein surgery and his innovative approach to minimally invasive procedures under local tumescent anesthesia.

But Denis Creton was never content merely to reproduce established techniques.

A Pioneer of Ambulatory Venous Surgery and tumescent local anesthesia

Perhaps one of Denis Creton's most important contributions was his pioneering role in the development and promotion of ambulatory varicose vein surgery in France.

At a time when conventional venous surgery frequently involved general anaesthesia, extensive stripping procedures, and prolonged hospitalisation, he was among those who understood that the future of venous surgery lay in a radically different philosophy.

Surgery should be less invasive, more selective, more physiological, and centered on the patient rather than on the procedure itself.

He strongly advocated the use of tumescent local anaesthesia, enabling venous interventions to be performed with excellent perioperative comfort, limited tissue trauma, and rapid postoperative mobilization.

His commitment to ambulatory phlebectomy, performed through tiny incisions without sutures, contributed to the modernization of varicose vein treatment.

He also supported the development of highly selective surgical strategies, preserving healthy venous

segments whenever possible rather than systematically removing the entire saphenous trunk. He was one of the main promoters of the new conservative "ASVAL technique" proposed by Bernard REA and Paul Pittaluga.

This approach reflected a profound understanding of venous hemodynamics, and Dr Creton was an expert in *venous hemodynamical mapping* (VHM) *with skin marking* before treatment. He also anticipated the growing importance of conservative strategies in modern phlebology.

For Denis Creton, technical innovation was never an end in itself. It was a means of improving patient outcomes, reducing postoperative discomfort, preserving venous function, and restoring quality of life.

A Surgeon Ahead of His Time

Denis Creton recognized very early the transformative potential of duplex ultrasonography in the diagnosis and treatment of venous disorders.

By integrating VHM into surgical decision-making, he promoted a more precise, tailorized, individualized and hemodynamically informed approach to venous intervention.

He was a pioneer in the use of endovenous treatments, including laser ablation, radiofrequency techniques, and ultrasound-guided foam sclerotherapy during surgery.

He understood that the progress of medicine does not consist in defending a particular technique, but in selecting the most appropriate treatment for each patient.

In this respect, he belonged to the French school of vascular surgeons who successfully bridged the transition from traditional open surgery to modern minimally invasive venous interventions.

An Internationally Respected Figure in Phlebology

Beyond his clinical achievements, Denis Creton played an important role in the development of the international venous community with a lot of original publications, in particular about small saphenous vein surgery, Endovenous laser and radiofrequency ablation.

He also participated in educational workshops to train young surgeons in these new minimally invasive and conservative techniques: With his colleagues Marc Lefèbvre-Vilardebo, Philippe Lemasle and Jean-François Uhl, he organized from 2002 to 2006 a practical training workshop of modern varicose vein surgery in Paris in the frame of the international school of venous Surgery (advanced venous intensive workshops sessions twice a year).

As a founding member of the European Venous Forum, he also contributed to the emergence of a European scientific community dedicated to advancing research, education, and clinical excellence in venous disease.

He was also an active member and administrator of the French Society of Phlebology, a full member of the French Society for Vascular Surgery and of the European Society of ambulatory phlebectomy.

His professional recognition extended beyond France, notably through his affiliations with the *Swiss Society of Phlebology* and the *Argentine Society of Phlebology and Lymphology*.

These international connections reflected both his scientific reputation and his commitment to the exchange of knowledge across national boundaries.

He belonged to a community of physicians for whom scientific progress was inseparable from friendship, collegiality, and the open discussion of ideas.

A Legacy of Innovation and Humanity

What made Denis Creton particularly remarkable was not simply his technical expertise or his scientific achievements. It was the coherence of his medical philosophy.

He believed that venous surgery could and should evolve towards procedures that were less aggressive, more precise, and more respectful of the patient's anatomy and physiology.

He demonstrated through his daily clinical practice that innovation could be combined with simplicity, efficiency, and patient comfort.

Through his website https://VeinSurg.com initiative in Nancy, he also sought to make modern venous treatments more understandable and accessible, providing educational information about venous anatomy, physiology, and therapeutic options.

His professional legacy continues through his son, Dr Olivier Creton, vascular surgeon who carries forward the family's commitment to venous medicine in Nancy.

There is something particularly meaningful in this continuity: beyond techniques, publications, and professional distinctions, the transmission of knowledge and values from one generation to the next is perhaps one of the most enduring achievements of a medical career.

A Final Tribute

Today, as we remember Denis Creton, we honor much more than the distinguished career of a vascular surgeon.

We honor a physician who contributed to transforming the treatment of venous disease with a more conservative approach.

We honor a pioneer who understood that surgical excellence could be achieved through smaller incisions, more selective interventions, and greater respect for normal anatomy.

We honor a colleague whose professional life was devoted to progress, scientific exchange, and the constant improvement of patient care.

And we honor a man whose contribution to French and European phlebology will remain part of the history of our specialty.

The true measure of a surgeon's legacy is not only the thousands of patients treated, the techniques developed, the venous workshops or the scientific societies served. It is also the lasting influence of his ideas, the example he leaves to younger generations, and the progress made possible by his work. In all these respects, Denis Creton leaves a remarkable legacy.

My friend Denis,

Your outstanding work has advanced our specialty. Your vision has helped transform our practice. Your dedication to patients will continue to inspire future generations of vascular surgeons and phlebologists.

There are colleagues we admire for their achievements. There are surgeons we respect for their skill and humanity, and friends whose absence leaves a silence that no scientific accomplishment can fill. You were all three.

You will be deeply missed by all of us.

May you rest in peace.

Jean- François UHL