

Prof. Yosef Yarden

Head, Department of Biological Regulation
Director, Dwek Institute for Cancer Therapy Research, MICC



Born in Israel, Prof. Yosef Yarden received his BSc in biological and geological sciences from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1980), and a PhD in molecular biology from the Weizmann Institute of Science (1985). His postdoctoral training was undertaken at Genentech, Inc., in San Francisco and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1988, he joined the Weizmann Institute of Science's faculty. At the Institute, he has served as Dean of the Faculty of Biology (1997-1999), Vice President for Academic Affairs (1999-2001), the first Director of the MD Moross Institute for Cancer Research (1999-2001), and Dean of the Feinberg Graduate School (2001-2007). He is the new director of the Dwek Institute for Cancer Therapy Research of the Moross Integrated Cancer Center and became the

head of the Department of Biological Regulation in June, 2017. He is the Harold and Zelta Goldenberg Professor of Molecular Cell Biology.

Prof. Yarden's research focuses on a vital family of proteins called "growth factors," hormone-like molecules that play a critical role in embryo development and in wound healing; and, particularly, on a group of four membrane-bound cellular proteins known as "epidermal growth factor receptors." His research is helping to shed light on the way growth factors and their receptors promote tumor growth. Prof. Yarden discovered the function of a molecular amplifier, called HER2, that strengthens the chemical signals that cause cells to become cancerous. This amplifier is an enzyme and a receptor found in large quantities on cancerous cell membranes, especially in breast, ovary, and gastric tumors. This finding established a foundation for new cancer treatments based on "silencing" the molecular amplifier.

From 2011 till 2014 Prof. Yarden served as President of the Federations of Israeli Societies of Experimental Biology (FISEB/ILANIT). Among his many honors and awards are the Israel Prize in Life Sciences (2017), the EMET Prize in Biochemistry (2007), the 43rd Leopold Griffuel Award of Fondation ARC pour la Recherche sur le Cancer (2015), the Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Brinker Award for Scientific Distinction in Basic Research (2012), the Ernst W. Bertner Memorial Award of the University of Texas' MD Anderson Cancer Center (2010), the 2008 Hamilton Fairly Award of the European Societies of Clinical Oncology (ESMO), the MERIT award of the U.S. National Cancer Institute (2005), the TEVA Founders Prize (2004), and the Michael Bruno Prize of the Yad Hanadiv (Rothschild) Fund (2000). He was elected to the Israel Academy of Science and Humanities in 2007.