

UNIT 1

BIOGRAPHY: J.A. GRÍFOLS

IN COMBINATION WITH THE WORK OF EDWIN COHN, JOSÉ ANTONIO GRÍFOLS PAVED THE WAY TO THE BIRTH OF THE PLASMA FRACTIONATION INDUSTRY. GRÍFOLS ESTABLISHED THE PLASMAPHERESIS PROCEDURE AND FOUNDED GRÍFOLS LABORATORIES IN BARCELONA (SPAIN), SPECIALIZING IN CLINICAL ANALYSIS, TRANSFUSIONS, AND PLASMA DONATION TO DEVELOP PLASMA-DERIVED MEDICINES.



In 1940, Dr. Grífols Roig founded the company Laboratorios Grífols, along with his sons, Víctor and José Antonio Grífols Lucas. These scientists were pioneers in the process of plasmapheresis and development of equipment for blood banks.

In 1945, Grífols opened the first private blood bank in Spain, and it later became the first plasmapheresis center worldwide.

The year 1951 marks a milestone in the history of hematology: Dr. José Antonio Grífols Lucas developed plasmapheresis, a technique consisting of reinfusing red blood cells to the donor immediately after the extraction. This important technique is still used worldwide today. The research was presented at the 4th International Congress of Blood Transfusion in Lisbon, Portugal, followed by a scientific article published in the *British Medical Journal*.

After this, other articles on the advances of plasma fractionation were published, and, in 1957, the first Grífols plasma fractionation plant opened in Barcelona.

In 1952, Grífols started manufacturing intravenous solutions as well as scientific equipment for clinical diagnostics to complement the blood bank, which was their main activity.

Further studies on plasmapheresis were conducted with his brother Víctor and presented in congresses and scientific publications during the 1950s. In addition to developing the technique of plasmapheresis, his scientific achievements included the identification of phosphatases and the study of Rh genotypes. He was a keen advocate of the use of concentrated red blood cells and the list of his achievements would undoubtedly have been even more extensive had his life not been cut short.

José Antonio Grífols died from leukemia on October 10, 1958, at age 41. He is remembered for his tireless research in hematology and for establishing the basis of plasmapheresis, a technique of obtaining plasma proteins. Plasma proteins can be used in medicines to help treat people with certain rare and genetic diseases.