

Prof. Bülent Gürler

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I commemorate with profound love and longing my beloved husband, Prof. Bülent Gürler, whose passing at such an unexpected time deeply grieved me, our beloved son, and all his loved ones.

For 42 years, Bülent Gürler was not only my life partner but also an exemplary husband, father, and grandfather. With his calm nature, modesty, quiet strength, and unwavering integrity, he left an unforgettable mark on every heart he touched. A true gentleman, he pursued science with dedication, achieved numerous accomplishments, and pioneered innovations that continue to guide many to this day.



Photograph. Prof. Bülent Gürler (1950-2025).

Born on April 29, 1950, in İstanbul, he completed his primary, secondary, and high school education in Kahramanmaraş, where his father worked as a physician. In 1967, he was admitted to İstanbul Technical University with honors and graduated as a chemical engineer in 1972. In 1974, he joined the Department of Microbiology, Tropical Diseases, and Parasitology at the İstanbul School of Medicine—where his father had once studied—as a research assistant. In these early years, he focused on biotechnology and fermentation, when only a handful of researchers in Türkiye studied in these fields.

In 1982, he received his Doctor of Medical Sciences degree for his work on the pro-

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duction of alpha-amylase enzyme by fermentation. He later advanced in his academic career, becoming an Associate Professor in 1989 and a full Professor in 1995. To further expand his knowledge and experience, he spent nearly two years between 1980 and 1981 at the University of Göttingen and the Detmold Biotechnology Research Institute in Germany, fully supported by his own resources.

At the University of Göttingen, he studied carboxydobacteria, investigating their potential in reducing carbon monoxide emissions and producing single-cell protein. Today, when carbon monoxide's impact on air pollution is beyond dispute, the significance of this work becomes even clearer.

Following his doctorate, Professor Gürler continued his academic career, focusing on studies in various areas of medical microbiology, particularly general microbiology. His research on hospital infections, disinfection, antisepsis, sterilization, and their applications became highly influential. In 2004, he founded the Society of Disinfection, Antisepsis, and Sterilization (*Dezenfeksiyon, Antisepsi Sterilizasyon Derneği*, DAS) as its President, and later became its Honorary President. He continued his service on the board until December 2024.

He was a pioneer in Türkiye in systematically determining the effectiveness of disinfectants and antiseptics, thereby helping to prevent the unsafe and indiscriminate use of these agents in healthcare settings. He also conducted important research on mechanisms of disinfectant resistance and associated resistance genes. Over the years, he contributed significantly to the development of safe and effective disinfection, antisepsis, and sterilization practices in laboratories, operating rooms, sterilization units, and patient wards.

As a founding member of the Antibiotic and Chemotherapy Association (*Antibiyotik ve Kemoterapi Derneği*, ANKEM) since 1986, he served on its board from its inception and, from 2005 onward, as its President. Owing to his dedication, numerous congresses and scientific activities were sustained and expanded.

Prof. Gürler touched the lives of countless students through his courses in general microbiology and industrial microbiology, educating new generations in various faculties, especially medical schools. He also played a crucial role in Türkiye's Culture Collections—previously available only within the Public Health Institution—serving as Director of the Culture Collections Center until his retirement. During this period, he established collaborations with international centers, organized international meetings, promoted the center, and ensured the free distribution of strains to many researchers.

After retiring from the İstanbul School of Medicine in 2017, he continued to teach General Microbiology and Immunology at the School of Pharmacy at İstanbul Health and Technology University from 2020 until the day he passed away. He also served as Head of the Culture, Arts, and Sports Department at the İstanbul School of Medicine, encouraging students to flourish in fields beyond medicine.

Prof. Bülent Gürler lived a life devoted to science, integrity, and kindness. His legacy will continue to inspire all who had the privilege of knowing him. He is deeply missed, lovingly remembered, and forever cherished.