

Yair Aharonowitz is a Professor of Microbiology and Biotechnology at Tel Aviv University (TAU). After receiving his Ph.D. from TAU, he joined the group of Professor Arnold Demain in the biochemical engineering group at MIT (USA). In 1977 he returned to Israel and joined the academic staff of Tel Aviv University. Over the years his research involved metabolic regulation studies of beta-lactam antibiotic biosynthesis, developing rational selection for overproducing strains, and was involved in the development of gel entrapment systems for whole cell immobilization to be used in complex biosynthetic processes. Since the mid eighties his research has focused on the molecular biology of the early steps of beta-lactam antibiotic biosynthesis. His more recent research interests and projects have involved the characterization of microbial thiol-disulfide redox metabolism, studying mainly microbial life lacking glutathione. He was involved in discovering the alternative thiol systems that exist in the actinomycetes, the unique thiol metabolite – Micothiol. In *Listeria monocytogenes* he was involved in the discovery of a multidomain protein that integrates the two primary catalytic activities required for glutathione biosynthesis and has described a new route for glutathione synthesis. Currently, Prof. Aharonowitz' research focuses on the multiplicity of the ribonucleotide reductase systems of Gram-positive bacteria and its regulation at the gene expression level.

Yair has collaborated with scientists from all over the world. He was a visiting scientist in Oxford England, an Alberta Heritage Fellow of the Universities of Alberta, visiting professor at the UBC, Vancouver, Canada, at the University of California, La Jolla, the Karolinska Institute Stockholm, Sweden, and the University of Würzburg, Germany.