



# Kabat (Elvin A.) papers

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Rockefeller Archive Center
<b>Creator:</b>	Rockefeller Foundation
<b>Creator - aut:</b>	Kabat, Elvin A. (Elvin Abraham)
<b>Title:</b>	Elvin A. Kabat papers
<b>ID:</b>	FA020
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1934-1990
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7.7 Cubic Feet 16 document cases
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English

### Preferred Citation

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## Biographical/Historical note

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Elvin A. Kabat (1914-2000), a pioneer in the field of immunochemistry, worked for three decades on standardizing immunological science. In the late 1930s he worked as a Fellow at the Institute of Physical Chemistry for the Rockefeller Foundation and later he was a leading member of the faculty at Columbia University. He spent much of his early career working on the structure and immunochemistry of blood-group substances, analyzing the binding properties of antibodies and developing immunodiagnostic tests for multiple sclerosis. He paved the way for the modern experimental autoimmunity process. Kabat also devoted much of his time to mentoring new and often passed-over scientists. He aided foreign medical and chemistry students and provided opportunities to women and African American students in the United States during a time when these opportunities were virtually non-existent.

Through his hard work and endless efforts, a Kabat database was created to aid students in standard immunochemistry. Kabat was also a prolific writer. He authored numerous books, including "Sequences of Proteins of Immunological Interests" and "Kabat and Mayer's Experimental Immunochemistry," which

became the text book for all future graduate and doctoral students. He often submitted articles on his latest research and contributed to the Immunochemical Studies on Blood Groups.

Kabat was known for his tireless pursuit of honesty and justice. Through the Freedom of Information Act, Dr. Kabat discovered that during the McCarthy era he was placed on a watch list because of his Eastern European heritage and because of his work with the National Research Council and the United States military.

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<b>Chronology</b>	
September 1, 1914	Born in New York City to Harris Kabatchinick, from Lithuania, and Doreen Otesky from the Ukraine.
Spring 1929	Graduated from DeWitt Clinton High School (at the age of 15).
Fall 1929	Began studying at City College.
1932	Obtained a Bachelors of Science degree from the College of the City of New York.
1933-1937	Laboratory Assistant in Immunochemistry, Presbyterian Hospital, New York.

1934	Obtained an MA from Columbia University.
1937	Obtained a Ph.D. from Columbia University.
1937-1938	Rockefeller Foundation Fellow at Institute of Physical Chemistry, Uppsala, Sweden with Professors The Svedberg and Arne Tiselius.
1938-1941	Instructor of Pathology, Cornell Medical College.
1941-1946	Research Associate in Biochemistry (assigned to Neurology), College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University and the Neurological Institute, Presbyterian Hospital.
1942	Married Sally Lennick.
1942-1943	Director of Immunochemical Studies on Meningococcus Meningitis under subcontract from the Meningitis Commission, Board for the Control of Epidemic Diseases, United States Army.
1942-1945	Responsible investigator for three OSRD projects for Committee on Medical Research.
1943-1945	Chemist to an NDRC project. Member, Scientific Staff, Division of War Research, Columbia University.
1945-1947	Consultant, Chemical Warfare Service, Camp Detrick, Maryland.
1946-1948	Assistant Professor of Bacteriology, Columbia University.
1947-1951	Attending Consultant, Veterans Administration Hospital, Kingsbridge, Bronx, New York.
1948-1952	Associate Professor of Bacteriology, Columbia University.

1949	Eli Lilly Award in Bacteriology and Immunology.
1950	Visiting Staff Member, University of California Summer Session, Berkeley, California.
1950-1951	Harvey Lecturer.
1951-1953	Member, Subcommittee on Shock, National Research Council.
1952-1985	Professor of Microbiology, Columbia University.
1953-1967	Member, Medial Advisory Board, National Multiple Sclerosis Society.
1953-1971	Member, Panel on Plasma, National Research Council.
1954-1968	Member, Scientific and Education Council, American Foundation for Allergic Diseases.
1956-1958	Member, Symposium Advisory Committee Unitarian Service Committee.
1956-1959	Member, Research Review Panel, National Multiple Sclerosis Society.
1956-1985	Microbiologist Medical Service, Presbyterian Hospital, Neurological Institute.
1957-1960	Editorial Board Transplantation Bulletin.
1957-1962	Member, Biochemistry Advisory Panel AIBS to Office of Naval Research.
1957-1967	Member, Ad Hoc Panel and Committee on Tissue Transplantation, National Research Council.
1960	William Pyle Philips Lecturer, Haverford College.

1961	Editorial Board, Journal of Immunological.
1961-1964	Councillor American Association of Immunologists.
1962	Golden Hope Chest Award, National Multiple Sclerosis Society.
1962-1968	Scientific Advisory Committee, Institute of Microbiology, Rutgers.
March 1963	Visiting Professor, Department of Microbiology, University of California, San Francisco.
April 1964	Professor, College de France, Paris.
1964	John S. Sharpe Memorial Lecturer, Bryn Mawr Hospital, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
1964-1965	Vice President, American Association of Immunologists.
1965	Member of Scientific Committee New York Blood Center.
1965-1966	President, American Association of Immunologists.
1965-1975	Member, World Health Organization Advisory Panel on Immunology.
1966	Member, National Academy of Sciences. Member, American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
1967	Almroth Wright Lecturer, St. Mary's Hospital, Wright Fleming Institute, London.
1968	Claude Bernard Medal, Universit de Montreal. E. B. Wilson Lecturer, University of Texas, Austin.

1968-1972	Chairman, Committee on Latimaria, National Academy of Sciences.
1969	Professor of Human Genetics and Development, Columbia University.
1969-1972	National Science Foundation Panel on Molecular Biology.
1971	Member, Committee on Viral Hepatitis, National Research Council.
1974-1975	Fogarty Scholar at U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH).
1975-2000	Dr. Kabat divided his time between Columbia and NIH.
1991	Received the National Medal of Science.
June 16, 2000	Passed away at the age of 86.

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## Arrangement note

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The Elvin A. Kabat Papers are arranged in two series:

Series 1 - Personal

Series 2 - General Correspondence

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## File Plan note

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Former Classification: XVIII



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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Biochemistry
- Immunology
- Rockefeller Foundation
- Kabat, Elvin A. (Elvin Abraham)

## Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Materials requiring specialized equipment for access (film, audio, video, slides) may be closed to research dependent on availability of the applicable equipment

Brittle or damaged items, or materials otherwise in need of preservation care, may be closed to researchers at the discretion of the RAC Head of Archival Services/Head of Reference.

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## Collection Inventory

### Personal, 1934-1988

Physical Description: 0.5 Cubic Feet 1 box

#### Arrangement note

The Personal series is arranged alphabetically.

#### Scope and Contents note

This series includes Dr. Kabat's curriculum vitae, biographical notes, appointment information, and personal correspondence with colleagues and friends. News releases and lecture series information can also be found here, as well as notes from his sabbatical and correspondence concerning his numerous publications and book information.

Title/Description	Instances	
Appointments, 1974, 1982-1983	box 1	folder 1
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<b>Scope and Contents note</b> Biographical Sketch, Publication Listings, and Resume		
Biographical Information, undated	box 1	folder 4
<b>Scope and Contents note</b> Publications		
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## General Correspondence, 1944-1990

Physical Description: 7.2 Cubic Feet 15 boxes

### Arrangement note

The General Correspondence series is arranged alphabetically.

### Scope and Contents note

This series contains work-related correspondence between Dr. Kabat and many of his lab assistants and co-workers. This includes information on his work with Michael Heidelberger, Manfred Martin Mayor and notes from Dr. Mayor's memorial speech, notes from the Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize Committee, and letters of gratitude from former students. This section includes files on Dr. Kabat's work on the Matheson Commission, project proposals, and requests for materials, letters of recommendation, critiques, some lab notes, lecture notes, letters from former students and applications from those seeking to study under Dr. Kabat. Awards from various organizations, including the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and various other notifications of awards can also be found in this series, as well as correspondence pertaining to Dr. Kabat's involvement with numerous societies and organizations.

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