



MATILDA

EFFECT



Pionierinnen der Forschung Female Pioneers
of Research

Pt. 47

Tu Youyou



BESSEr@KIT





Tu Youyou (*1930)

Pharmacologist & Nobel Laureate

Already as a child very interested in education, she decided to study medicine after a tuberculosis illness in order to help others.

At *Peking University*, she learned both Western and traditional Chinese medicine.

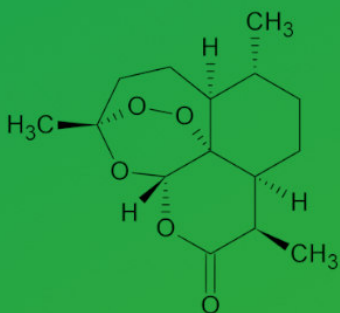


After working at the *Institute of Materia Medica for Traditional Chinese Medicine* on the study of Chinese medicinal plants, she became part of the Chinese government's 'Project 523' in the 1960s, which aimed to find new drugs against malaria.

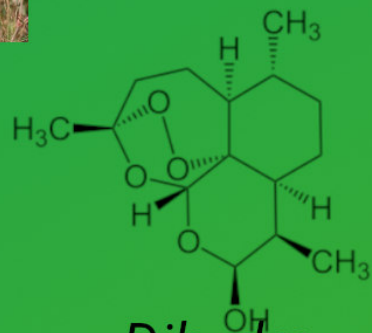
In this context, she was able to combine her knowledge of traditional medicine with modern scientific methods.



In 1971, she succeeded in isolating the active ingredient *artemisinin* from *Artemisia annua*, which proved to be highly effective against malaria. The derivative *dihydroartemisinin*, which she developed two years later, turned out to be even more effective.



Artemisinin



Dihydro-
artemisinin



This discovery saved millions of lives worldwide, which is why Youyou was honored with the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2015, alongside numerous other awards — as the first Chinese woman ever, without a doctoral degree or international research experience.





„Every scientist dreams of doing something that can help the world.“

"Jede*r Wissenschaftler*in träumt davon, etwas zu tun, das der Welt hilft."

