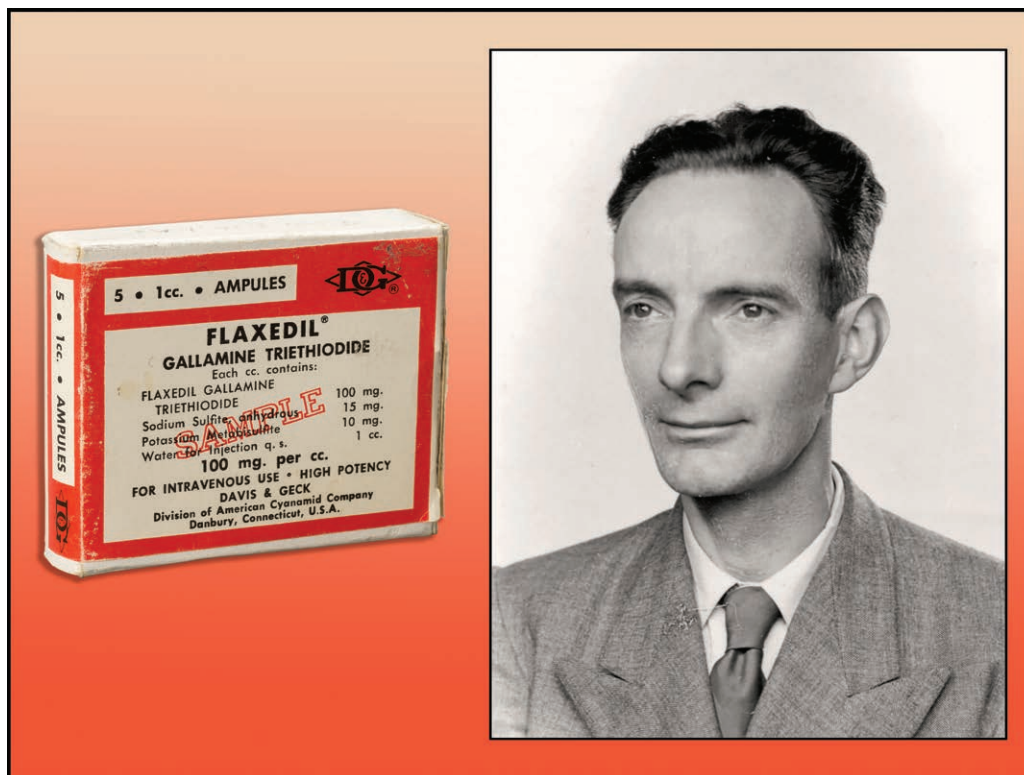


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

France's Daniel Bovet and Gallamine, the First Synthetic Nondepolarizing Muscle Relaxant Used Clinically



A Swiss-born Italian pharmacologist, Daniel Bovet (1907 to 1992, *right*) was a research scientist famous for discovering the first antihistamine (1937) and for synthesizing (1947) gallamine, a reversible nondepolarizing muscle relaxant. Named by the multilingual Bovet after France (Latin: *Gallia*), gallamine was synthesized in Paris by Bovet as a bulky trisquaternary curariform compound. Ironically, high doses of gallamine triethiodide (boxed and branded as Flaxedil, *left*) released histamine, which Bovet had researched previously. His success with gallamine contributed to Bovet's forsaking his 18-yr career at the celebrated Pasteur Institute for a series of research opportunities back in his family's homeland of Italy. In 1957, Bovet won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for his discoveries relating to synthetic compounds that inhibit the action of certain body substances, and especially their action on the vascular system and the skeletal muscles." Unfortunately, Bovet clouded his Nobel laurels in a tobacco fog about 8 yr later by publishing that individuals could raise their intelligence by smoking. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator and Laureate of the History of Anesthesia, Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.