

Theodor Kocher Institute in Bern

The Theodor Kocher Institute (TKI) is part of the medical faculty of the University of Bern. Research at the TKI is concerned with inflammatory processes. Today, it is located at Freiestrasse 1 in Bern, and immediately next to it at No. 3 is the Chemical Institute. It was named after the physician Theodor Kocher (1841-1917, Nobel Prize 1909).



In 1867, Edwin Klebs, previously an assistant to Rudolf Virchow in Berlin, was appointed full professor of pathology at the University of Bern. At about the same time, Theodor Kocher, a 27-year-old assistant surgeon, introduced Josef Lister's antiseptic surgical and dressing methodology in Bern. In 1866, to further the study of wound infections, Kocher commissioned his associate Ernst Tavel (1858-1912, introduced the wound disinfectant Vioform in 1900) to establish a bacteriological laboratory. Apparently it was not until 1896 that Tavel was able to move into a newly constructed building. However, the proposed name "Institut für Infektionslehre" (Institute for the Study of Infectious Diseases) was rejected, and the Bernese government council finally decided to officially name the institute "Institut zur Erforschung von Infektionskrankheiten" (Institute for the Study of Infectious Diseases).



Envelope from the University of Bern (TKI) to the author of this article.