

Associate Professor Seija-Liisa Karvonen 1957–2009



Seija-Liisa Karvonen passed away on 15 August 2009 after a two-year struggle against a rare cancer. Seija-Liisa was born and raised in Pori (Björneborg) on the west coast of Finland. She studied medicine in the city of Tampere (Tammerfors) and graduated in 1983 as an MD at the University of Tampere. She also received her specialty in Dermatology and Venereology in Tampere in 1990, after which she worked as a specialist and clinical instructor. Her primary research interests included congenital naevi and acne fulminans, and she completed her doctoral thesis entitled: "Acne fulminans and severe nodular acne" in 1994. In 1990, Seija-Liisa moved to Oulu (Uleåborg) and married Professor Jaakko Karvonen. She worked in Oulu University Hospital as a specialist and clinical instructor. In the field of research, she became an expert in culturing healthy and aberrant keratinocytes and melanocytes, and worked in several projects on calcium signalling in psoriasis and neurofibromatosis, earning her doctor's degree in 2000.

In 2001, the Karvonen family moved to Helsinki, where Seija-Liisa worked in the Skin and Allergy Hospital as a specialist and clinical instructor. She focused on treating patients with severe psoriasis and was active in starting new biological

drugs on her patients. In 2004–2007, Seija-Liisa Karvonen was the coordinator of the National Graduate School of Clinical Investigation. During that time, she was actively working on psoriasis treatment guidelines. She was the primary writer of the Current Care Guidelines for psoriasis in Finland, an effort that she completed during treatment for her cancer.

Seija-Liisa was an energetic person, inspiring teacher and was straightforward in her research. She enjoyed many different aspects of life and kept up her favourite hobbies, such as riding, throughout her life. She got pleasure from nature, especially wandering in forests and picking mushrooms. She also liked singing and enjoyed arts and sports. During the last few years she concentrated on designing and following the construction of a new family house in Hanko (Hangö). Seija-Liisa spent her last summer in the new home by the sea on the Gulf of Finland. Seija-Liisa's death was a huge loss to her family, husband and two daughters, and to her friends and colleagues.

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*I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.*

Lord Tennyson 1849: referring to the death of a friend.