

Daniel Whistler Encyclopedia Article

Daniel Whistler

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1619-1684

English physician who in 1645 provided the first scientific description of a vitamin D deficiency, or rickets. Whistler described the condition, wherein "the whole bony structure is as flexible as softened wax," in his Oxford doctoral dissertation, *Inaugural Medical Disputation on the Children's Disease of the English Which the Inhabitants Idiomatically Call the Rickets*. Five years later, in 1650, Francis Glisson (1597-1677) observed the same condition. Not until the early twentieth century would physicians be able to devise preventive measures against rickets.