

Edgar Douglas Adrian Encyclopedia Article

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1889-1977

English physiologist who won the 1932 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, along with Charles Sherrington, for his studies of nerve impulses. During World War I, Adrian worked primarily with patients suffering from nerve injuries and nervous disorders, and in 1919 began the work for which he would become famous. He was able to amplify nerve impulses by electronic means to achieve a more sensitive measure of these impulses, enabling him to isolate impulses from a single sensory nerve fiber and to study the electrical impulses that cause pain. Adrian also studied the electrical activity of the brain, and investigated abnormalities as revealed by an encephalogram. His work led to progress in the study of epilepsy and the location of other types of brain lesions.