

TUNISIA

Habiba Bouhamed Chaabouni

Medicine and genetics

Habiba Bouhamed Chaabouni is a paediatrician and professor at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tunis - El Manar, where she also directs the Human Genetics Research Laboratory. She is also founder and head of the Congenital and Hereditary Diseases Department at the Charles Nicolle Hospital.

Concerned about the serious health consequences of consanguineous unions, which are so deeply rooted in traditional societies such as that of Tunisia, she specialised in human genetics and began research on topics such as congenital malformations, anomalies in sexual differentiation and mental retardation of genetic origin, trying to gain a deeper understanding of genetic mutations in patients affected by these and other autosomal recessive disorders.

She has long fought for the recognition of genetics as a medical speciality and for its teaching in Tunisian medical schools.

She has received the L'Oréal-UNESCO Award for Women in Science and has participated in international committee work for the preparation of the universal declaration on the human genome.