



Alice Hamilton (1869.2.27 - 1970.9.22)

An American physician, research scientist, and author. She was a leading expert in the field of occupational health and a pioneer in the field of industrial toxicology.

Education and Career:

Hamilton trained at the [University of Michigan Medical School](#). Her residency at [Hull House](#) in [Chicago](#) from 1887 to 1919 put her in contact with an extensive demographic of working-class households, and the work-life dangers they faced. She also became a professor of pathology at the [Woman's Medical School](#) of [Northwestern University](#) in 1897. In 1919, she became the first woman appointed to the faculty of [Harvard University](#).

Later years:

After her retirement from Harvard in 1935, Hamilton became a medical consultant to the U.S. Division of Labor Standards. Her last field survey, which was made in 1937–1938, investigated the [viscose rayon industry](#). In addition, Hamilton served as president of the National Consumers League from 1944 to 1949.

Death and legacy:

Hamilton died of a stroke at home in [Hadlyme, Connecticut](#), on September 22, 1970, at the age of 101. She is buried at Cove Cemetery in Hadlyme.

Hamilton was a tireless researcher and crusader against the use of toxic substances in the workplace. Within three months of her death in 1970, the [U.S. Congress](#) passed the [Occupational Safety and Health Act](#) to improve workplace safety in the United States.

Her scientific research focused on the study of occupational illnesses and the dangerous effects of industrial metals and [chemical compounds](#). In addition to her scientific work, Hamilton was a social-welfare reformer, humanitarian, and peace activist. She received numerous honors and awards, including the [Albert Lasker Public Service Award](#). Her work led to improvements in safety and regulation, and is sometimes credited with leading to the founding of the United States [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#).

External links:

- [The Woman Who Founded Industrial Medicine](#), Scientific American, October 23, 2019
- [Hamilton, Alice, 1869-1970. Papers of Alice Hamilton, 1909-1987 \(inclusive\), 1909-1965 \(bulk\): A Finding Aid Schlesinger Library Archived](#) 2012-05-09 at the [Wayback Machine](#), Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.
- [Alice Hamilton in The Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame](#)
- [Alice Hamilton](#) at [The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](#)
- [Alice Hamilton, M.D.](#) – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)