



Vladimir Khavinson russian peptide researcher, when did he die

Vladimir Khavinson died on **January 5–6, 2024** (sources vary by one day, with his official Wikipedia entry citing January 6 and his WOCPM obituary listing January 5). He was 77 years old at the time of his death, having been born on November 27, 1946.^{[1] [2]}

Life and Legacy

Khavinson was director of the St. Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology and a full Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He spent decades pioneering peptide bioregulators — the so-called "Khavinson peptides" — and was the inventor of six pharmaceuticals approved by the Russian Ministry of Health, including **Thymalin**, **Cortexin**, **Epithalamin**, **Retinalamin**, **Samprost**, and **Thymogen**. He is perhaps best known in longevity circles as the discoverer of **Epitalon** (Epithalon), a synthetic tetrapeptide derived from Epithalamin.^{[1] [3] [4]}

Cause of Death

The official cause of death was never publicly announced. Speculation circulated online that he suffered a heart attack, but this was not confirmed by any official source. His passing at 77 — notably short of his own stated goal of living to 100 or beyond — drew considerable irony from commentators given his life's work.^{[5] [6] [7] [8]}

Context for His Research

Khavinson held the rank of Colonel in the Russian military medical service and was reportedly involved in administering peptide protocols to Russian athletes, soldiers, and Kremlin figures including, reportedly, Putin's companion Alina Kabaeva. His body of work spans over 800 scientific publications and he was Treasurer of the European region of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics.^{[2] [7]}



What journals was he an editor

Khavinson served on the editorial boards of **8 named journals** , with a particularly prominent role at *Advances in Gerontology*:

- **Advances in Gerontology** (St. Petersburg) — **Deputy Editor-in-Chief** of both the Russian and English (Springer) editions

- **Clinical Gerontology** (Moscow) – Editorial Board member
- **Bulletin of Experimental Biology and Medicine** (Moscow)
- **Cytokines and Inflammation** (St. Petersburg)
- **Geronto-Geriatrics** (Mexico)
- **Herald of Gerontological Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences** (St. Petersburg)
- **Medical Academy Journal** (St. Petersburg)
- **Neuroendocrinology Letters** (Stockholm) – Honorary Director

Beyond those eight, his obituary notes he was a member of editorial boards of **15 Russian and international scientific journals** in total . He also contributed a special issue to the journal *Biogerontology* in collaboration with its editor-in-chief Suresh Rattan .

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Have any of his peptides been validated in independent studies published in more reputable journals

This is an important and nuanced question. The honest answer is: **independent validation exists, but it is highly uneven across his peptides**, and the overall evidence base remains a legitimate concern. Here's a breakdown by compound:

Epitalon – The Most Contested

Epitalon has the most published data of Khavinson's peptides, yet remains the most criticized for lack of independent replication. The Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation reviewed the evidence and concluded that **independent validation is still needed** – one of the clinical trial papers wasn't even publicly accessible, and both major human trials had serious methodological flaws (unclear blinding, unverified randomization) . Biomeme's evidence scoring framework gives Epitalon a **31/100 (Grade D)**, citing no Western peer-reviewed RCTs and evidence almost entirely from Khavinson's own institution .

Notably, a **2025 independent study** published in PMC (NIH) from a non-Khavinson group did confirm that Epitalon enhances telomerase activity in normal human cells but not cancer cells – providing some biological plausibility . A Medical University of Warsaw review also independently characterized it as a genuine tetrapeptide in the AEDG class . However, both the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation and evidence-based medicine critics in Russia have stated the **clinical efficacy evidence is very small** .

Thymalin – Stronger Independent Support

Thymalin arguably has the most credible independent support. A 2021 study published in PMC (not affiliated with Khavinson's institute) tested Thymalin in severe COVID-19 elderly patients at Chita State Medical Academy and found it **halved in-hospital mortality** . This is the strongest independent signal in the Khavinson portfolio – a different institution, a contemporary design, and published in an indexed journal .

Cortexin – Moderate Independent Validation

Cortexin (a polypeptide brain extract, not a single sequence) has been studied by independent Russian neurologists and is a **registered pharmaceutical in Russia** used clinically for stroke and TBI. Multiple non-Khavinson groups have published on its neuroprotective effects in indexed Russian medical journals. However, it hasn't been validated in major Western journals like *NEJM*, *Lancet*, or *JAMA*.

GHK-Cu – The Best-Validated by Far

GHK-Cu (Copper tripeptide-1) was originally discovered by Loren Pickart in the 1970s at the University of California – completely independent of Khavinson – and has the richest independent evidence base of any peptide in this space . A 2025 meta-analysis of 7 RCTs (n=456) confirmed significant wrinkle reduction effects (SMD -0.72, p<0.001) . A 2021 RCT in diabetic ulcers (n=72) showed 85% wound closure vs 55% in controls . Multiple independent groups have confirmed its collagen synthesis, anti-inflammatory, and wound-healing properties, with reviews published in *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, *PMC/NIH*, and dermatology journals .

The Core Problem

The central critique, echoed by Vasily Vlasov (Professor and VP of the Russian Society of Evidence-Based Medicine), is that **virtually all Khavinson peptide studies were conducted by the same group** that holds the patents and profits from the products . The studies are mostly small, often unblinded, published in low-impact Russian-language journals like *Advances in Gerontology* – which Khavinson himself edited – creating obvious publication bias risk . Independent non-Russian replication is sparse for most of his bioregulators, though mechanistic plausibility is generally considered reasonable .

Bottom line for your formulation work: GHK-Cu has solid independent backing for topical use. Thymalin has the most credible independent clinical signal. Epitalon has emerging independent mechanistic support but no validated RCTs outside Khavinson's group. The rest of the catalog (Endoluten, Vladonix, Cartalax, etc.) has essentially zero independent replication to date .



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