Special Section

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Introduction

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As in the past few years, this supplement to Hormone Research is devoted to the proceedings of the XIIth Annual Lilly International Symposium on Endocrinology and Development, held in Interlaken, in Autumn 1993.

As in previous meetings, topics in basic and clinical aspects of hormone research were presented and discussed. On the first day of the symposium, the workshops focused on pubertal development and its somatic and psychological aspects. Physicians undertaking therapeutic intervention should always consider that somatic and psychological changes should occur in parallel. Both of the workshops on puberty were followed by very lively discussions, indicating the need to further develop a common approach between paediatric endo-crinologists and psychiatrists in treating disorders of puberty.

The second day of the symposium provided a comprehensive, state-of-the-art review of basic aspects of hormone receptor physiology. As a result of tremendous technological advances, knowledge in this area has exploded during recent years and has provided a basis for understanding how whole body systems interact with individual cells. The knowledge gained has also provided means to control and modify the action and effects of a peptide hormone by changing the physicochemical and biochemical properties of the hormone itself or of its ligand. This approach offers an interesting new potential for the development of hormone analogues with highly enhanced or selective action. The interactions of insulin-like growth factors, insulin and growth hormone with their respective receptors have been taken as a model for this concept, because the first breakthrough with this approach, that is, the development of a short-acting insulin analogue, has come from this area of research.

As with past issues, we are confident that this supplement will provide valuable and stimulating information to the expert as well as to the more general reader.

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