Preface

A variety of cell types and molecules have been implicated in the pathophysiology of allergic diseases. Among them, eosinophils have long been thought to play key roles in allergic responses, chronic inflammation, hypersensitivity, remodeling and repair, but recently that has been re-questioned. Simple antagonism against (Th2) cytokines, receptors, mediators, etc., does not achieve satisfactory effects. Instead, epithelial-mesenchymal disorders, innate immunity, and pathogens including viruses have recently become topics in asthma research. Apparently, we still have some way to go to fully understand the mechanisms of allergy and better serve our patients. IL-23, Th17, IL-33, TSLP, amphiregulin, osteopontin and PGD₂ may be good targets for current research.

The 20th annual workshop on 'Eosinophils in Allergy and Related Diseases' 2008 was held in Tokyo on June 21, 2008, with 23 research presentations in the fields of basic and clinical sciences on allergy. This workshop provided a forum for both basic and clinical investigators to ex-

change ideas on the recent advances in the field of eosinophils related to allergy. The current topics include cytokines, chemokines, mediators, adhesion molecules, signal transducers, etc., expressed by eosinophils, neutrophils, T cells, mast cells, dendritic cells, etc. Possible novel diagnostic procedures and treatments were also discussed. The present proceedings include 16 peer-reviewed original papers, 1 peer-reviewed case report, and 2 reviews. One abstract and 3 titles, some of which have been or are going to be published elsewhere, are also included. We hope that these investigations will contribute to a better understanding and management of allergic diseases.

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