Yearbook of Pediatric Endocrinology 2011

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Preface

This was an exciting year (the Yearbook counts years from June to June, when we submit the manuscripts to the publisher): The Neanderthal genome was sequenced and compared to ours, H. sapiens, and it shows that Neanderthals shared more genetic variants with present-day humans in Eurasia than with present-day humans in sub-Saharan Africa; gene flow from Neanderthals into our ancestors of non-Africans occurred before the divergence of Eurasian groups from each other. This was also the year when the price of whole genome sequencing dropped such that it is now affordable by many investigators and clinicians. It was also the year when we learnt that the skeleton was part of the endocrine system beyond minerals regulating hormones: the skeleton controls reproductive and energy balance, while adipose tissue and insulin regulate bone metabolism.

The gargantuan advances of 2010–11 provide a new insight in pediatric endocrinology, and have been recapped by the Associate Editors of this 2010 Yearbook. These are based on discoveries in varied fields of genomics and genetics, molecular biology and systems biology, evolutionary biology, clinical trials and medical reports. As the complexity increases, the Yearbook becomes an essential reading for clinical scientists and practitioners who wish to update on the most recent developments in pediatric endocrinology and beyond.

In the Yearbook Preface we annually recognize a prize given in the field of endocrinology. Time and again, hormones are recognized as groundbreaking discoveries, and this year we salute Douglas Coleman and Jeffrey M. Friedman for their Lasker Award granted to them for the discovery of leptin.

We also mention annually important anniversaries: in 1911, Ernest Rutherford postulated that atoms have their positive charge concentrated in a very small nucleus, and thereby pioneered the Rutherford model, or planetary, model of the atom. Using isotopes in medicine reveals just some of the ways in which his work has been utilized.

These were labeled the four most deadliest words that will prevent progress on the personal but also at the scholar level: ‘I already know that’. Our twelve Associate Editors and their coauthors do not take anything for granted, and have once again done an enormous work to discern this year’s advances. The European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE) endorses the Yearbook in its 8th year, and we acknowledge the generous support of Pfizer that makes the Yearbook project possible. We thank again the Associate Editors who have contributed during these 8 years to the success of the Yearbook which has become a landmark in the yearly cycle of pediatric endocrinology. Our publisher, Karger, has also done a tremendous job to bring paperbacks on time to the ESPE meeting with so little time for preparation, thanks to the dedication of Mr. Hermann Frei. Several Associate Editors have come and gone, some of them might come back again. The same is true of the Editors and we welcome Ken Ong as the new Editor of the Yearbook with Ze’ev Hochberg for 2012.

Ze’ev Hochberg (Haifa)
Jean-Claude Carel (Paris)