Preface

The Japanese Gastroenterological Association (JGA) holds an annual scientific meeting that focuses on topics of current developments in basic and clinical gastroenterology, as well as future progress. The present *Digestion JGA Special Issue 2012* includes 8 reviews and 6 original articles presented at the 7th Annual Meeting of the JGA held in Kyoto in February 2011, which was organized by Prof. Yoshikawa, now the President, of Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine.

At the 7th Annual Meeting, more than 600 papers were presented and many attendees participated in enthusiastic, fruitful discussions. Chairpersons of the selected sessions recommended the best paper presented at their sessions for publication in the *Digestion JGA Special Issue 2012*. Of these, the editorial committee of the JGA selected 15 distinguished reports and requested those authors to submit their work for this issue. Two members of the JGA editorial committee independently reviewed the submitted manuscripts and requested intensive revisions at least once. After improving the manuscripts, I, serving as a guest editor of this special addition, accepted 14 papers for publication.

The theme of *Digestion JGA Special Issue 2012* is 'Infinite Expansion of Basic and Clinical Gastroenterology'. Recent advances in therapeutic endoscopy techniques in Japan, especially endoscopic submucosal dissection, have

been outstanding. Two reviews and three original papers in this issue describe the present situation and future expansion of endoscopic submucosal dissection methods. Furthermore, two other review papers describe present and future basic and clinical research endeavors regarding functional gastrointestinal diseases, which now represents one of the most intensively investigated areas of research in the field of gastroenterology. In addition, the other papers describe interesting findings obtained in research of inflammation and/or carcinogenesis. All of the articles in this issue are of high quality and very informative. The editorial committee members are confident that this issue maintains our high standard and shows the ever-expanding basic and clinical research conducted by members of the JGA. Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all of the authors and chairpersons for their contributions to this special issue.

Yoshikazu Kinoshita, MD, PhD

Chairperson of the

Association Journal Committee of the JGA

Yoshikazu Kinoshita has acted as a guest editor for the publication of this special issue sponsored by the JGA. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the JGA and acts as the JGA Editorial Representative for *Digestion*, the official journal of the JGA.