Preface

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Eosinophils are believed to be important effector cells in allergic inflammation such as asthma and other eosinophil-related diseases such as hypereosinophilic syndrome. Eosinophils exert proinflammatory effects by releasing granule proteins, lipid mediators such as leukotriene C₄, and other bioactive molecules, and are importantly involved in the pathogenesis of allergic inflammation in the upper and lower airways, gastrointestinal tract, skin and other tissues. They may also be involved in the remodeling of airway mucosa. Thus, the mechanisms for eosinophilopoiesis, mobilization of eosinophils from marrow, eosinophil recruitment into the tissue, activation and function of eosinophils, and immunological and pharmacological intervention of eosinophil function all are the current issues of eosinophil biology.

The 13th annual workshop on 'Eosinophils in Allergy and Related Diseases 2000' was held in Tokyo, June 17, 2000, with 29 research presentations in the fields of basic and clinical science. This workshop provided a forum for basic scientists and interested clinicians to exchange ideas on and to discuss the recent advances in the role of eosinophils in allergy. The presentations cover all the major topics in this field including the gene expression in eosinophil differentiation, the role of cytokines, chemokines and chemoattractants in eosinophil activation, the role of adhesion molecules in eosinophil adhesion and migration, the role of Th2 cells in eosinophilic inflammation and Th2 cell inactivation in the treatment of eosinophilic inflammation, and the effects of antiallergic drugs on eosinophil function. These proceedings include 15 selected papers, 5 of which are mini-review papers; the remaining 13 titles presented at the workshop are listed at the back of this issue. We hope these studies contribute to a better understanding and treatment of allergy and eosinophil-related diseases.

In addition, the international eosinophil society was established last year and the 1st International Eosinophil Symposium will be held in Banff, Canada, May 4–8, 2001. We are expecting an active discussion and an exchange of new knowledge of eosinophil biology and related diseases.

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