Preface

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Many cell types and molecules involved in allergic inflammation have been identified. The abundance of eosinophils at the site of inflammation and their relationship to the severity of disease have long supported the significance of this cell type in allergic disorders [1], although several recent investigations employing anti-IL-5 antibody failed to show a clinical benefit [2, 3]. The recent progress in eosinophil biology greatly improved our knowledge of the roles of cytokines, chemokines, their receptors, adhesion molecules, and signal transduction pathways. There is still a lot of work to be done to fully understand the mechanisms of allergy and manage severely ill patients.

The 15th Annual Workshop on Eosinophils in Allergy and Related Diseases 2003 was held in Tokyo on June 21, 2003, with presentations in the fields of basic and clinical research on allergy. This workshop provided a forum for both basic and clinical investigators to exchange ideas on the recent advances in the field of eosinophils in relation to allergy. The current topics include migration, activation, degranulation, expression of surface markers, signal transduction molecules, and gene expression of eosinophils. The roles of T cell cytokines and the effect of new treatments were also discussed. The present proceedings include 5 original papers and 2 reviews. Four abstracts, some of which have been published elsewhere, are also included. The remaining 7 titles presented at the workshop are listed at the back of this issue. We hope that these investigations will contribute to a better understanding of allergic diseases.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to Novartis Pharma KK (Tokyo) for supporting this workshop and to the International Medical Publisher (Tokyo) for excellent assistance in publishing these proceedings.

References

- 1 Bousquet J, Chanez P, Lacoste JY, et al: Eosinophilic inflammation in asthma. *N Engl J Med* 1990;323:1033.
- 2 Leckie MJ, Brinke A, Khan J, et al: Effects of an interleukin-5 blocking monoclonal antibody on eosinophils, airway hyper-responsiveness, and the late asthmatic response. *Lancet* 2000;356:2144–2148.
- 3 Kips JC, O'Connor BJ, Langley SJ, et al: Effect of SCH55700, a humanized anti-human interleukin-5 antibody, in severe persistent asthma. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2003;167:1655–1659.