



Editorial

Xth International Congress on Hormonal Steroids (Quebec City, Canada, 17–21 June 1998)

Introduction

The Xth International Congress on Hormonal Steroids was a unique opportunity to provide an update of the impressive progress recently made in the field of steroids. A fascinating scientific program had been put together with the most prestigious speakers at Plenary Lectures, and Symposia complemented by Poster Presentations.

The main subjects covered were steroid receptor action, steroid antagonists, steroids and the central nervous system, early steps in steroidogenesis, co-regulators of steroid receptors, menopause, congenital disorders of steroid formation, strategies in chemoprevention, drug development, cross-talk between nuclear steroid receptors and signalling pathways, enzyme inhibitors, prostate cancer, steroid receptor knock-outs, androgen excess, novel insights into estrogen mechanism of action through $E_{r\beta}$, phytoestrogens and hormone-dependent cancer, breast cancer, sex differentiation, adrenal steroidogenesis, endocrine and environmental disrupters, gonadal steroidogenesis, steroidogenic factor 1 and development, mineralocorticoids—hypertension, steroidogenic enzymes in intracrine tissues, steroids and the cell cycle and steroid transport.

Man, with some other primates, is unique in having adrenals that secrete large amounts of the precursor steroid DHEA sulfate and DHEA which are converted

into androgens and estrogens in peripheral target tissues, depending upon the level of expression of each steroidogenic enzyme in individual cells. This new and rapidly growing sector of endocrinology that focuses on the intracellular formation and action of hormones has been called intracrinology. This Congress was a unique opportunity to present the most recent data on the enzymes involved in steroid formation in gonadal as well as in peripheral intracrine tissues, namely 3β -HSD, 17β -HSD, 5α -reductase, aromatase as well as the enzymes involved in steroid inactivation.

We are pleased that this unique information can be found in this special issue of the *Journal of Steroid Biochemistry and Molecular Biology*. We specially thank the Schering-Plough Research Institute for an unrestricted educational grant, Members University of Program Committee, also chairpersons and all participants for their much appreciated collaboration.

I would like to thank all the speakers and participants for what has been a most stimulating and rewarding event.

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