

GHRELIN A NEW HORMONE IMPLICATED IN THE REGULATION OF GROWTH HORMONE SECRETION AND BODY ENERGY HOMEOSTASIS

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INTRODUCTION

Growth hormone (GH) has a complex regulation with two antagonistic hypothalamic hormones, growth hormone releasing hormone (GHRH) and somatostatin, as well as the liver-derived hormone IGF-I. Perhaps the old name of somatotrophic hormone (STH) is more coherent than GH, as this hormone is tightly regulated by the metabolic milieu; additionally, this regulation appears to be superimposed over the classical regulation by peptide hormones. For example, metabolic signals such as glucose, amino acids, free fatty acids and their by-products, such as keto-acids, as well as the energy balance status regulate the secretion of GH in a very relevant form. In turn, GH causes complex actions on the general metabolism of a given individual.

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From The Editor's Desk

This issue marks the beginning of a new era for *Growth, Genetics & Hormones (GGH)*; Dr. Robert M. Blizzard retired and I became the Editor-in-Chief. This opportunity is an honor and the task is a major challenge, as it will be hard to fill the shoes of my mentor. In this issue you will find some modifications in the format and appearance of the journal and some changes in the editorial board. Hopefully, you will also note and appreciate the continuous high quality of the publication, papers reviewed and editorial comments. The lead article on Ghrelin and the abstracts along with editorial comments are very pertinent and timely, all together we are very pleased with this issue.

Dr. Judith G. Hall who had been with this journal since its inception has retired from *GGH* and will be sorely missed. I bid her farewell and thank her for all of her many contributions. On the other hand, I welcome Adda Grinberg, MD and David E. Sandberg, PhD whose abbreviated biographical sketches are posted on our web site (www.GGHjournal.com). Two years ago we launched *GGH* on the internet and this has allowed us to reach a larger group of colleagues worldwide. Thus, I want to welcome a new group of international consulting editors who will help us project the journal internationally: Yoshikazu Nishi, MD in Japan, Raphael Rappaport, MD in France, and Alfonso Vargas, MD representing Latin America.

The last issue of 2003 included a survey which helped us renew our subscribers list and profile the readership. Over 60% of readers are pediatric endocrinologists and 15% are geneticists. A majority of our readers (78%) reside in the USA. Over two-thirds of the subscribers access the journal via the internet, usually after they are notified via e-mail announcing the publication of a new issue. Sixty percent view the journal and download it to keep as a reference. I thank everyone who responded to the survey and for the wonderful comments received; 81% gave *GGH* a very high/high ranking. The details of the survey are posted at www.GGHjournal.com.

This sets the challenge for the future - to reach more colleagues, to continue to improve the journal and to bring to our readers the most current reviews, updated information and advances in the field along with erudite editorial comments. Only through the internet with the on-line version of *GGH* can this be accomplished; within the budgetary constraints, a printed publication would not allow us to meet these goals. Thus we will continue to limit the printed subscriptions and phase out the printed journal by the end of 2004 while we further expand the readership through the internet.

Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation to our sponsors for the generous unrestricted, no strings attached educational grant for the publication of *GGH*. Please be sure you tell them how much you appreciate *GGH*. We also request that you keep us up-to-date with your current e-mail address so you continue to receive *GGH*. I thank you in advance for your consideration and comments (editor@GGHjournal.com).

Fima Lifshitz, MD, Editor-in-Chief