Editorial overview

Jan Tack and Giovanni Sarnelli

Current Opinion in Pharmacology 2018, 43:vi–vii

For a complete overview see the [Issue](#)

Available online 24th November 2018

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.coph.2018.11.005>

1471-4892/© 2018 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Jan Tack

University of Leuven, Department of Gastroenterology, Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, TARGID (the Translational Research Center for Gastrointestinal Disorders), Belgium
e-mail: jan.tack@kuleuven.be

Professor Jan Tack is currently a Head of Clinic in the Department of Gastroenterology, a Professor in Internal Medicine, former Chairman of the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine at the University of Leuven, Belgium, and a founding researcher of TARGID (the Translational Research Center for Gastrointestinal Disorders) at the University of Leuven. Professor Tack's scientific interest focuses on Neurogastroenterology and Motility, and includes diverse topics such as the pathophysiology and management of gastrointestinal functional and motor disorders such as gastroesophageal reflux disease, functional dyspepsia, gastroparesis, chronic constipation and the irritable bowel syndrome, the physiology and pharmacology of the enteric nervous system, gastrointestinal hormones and the control of satiation and food intake. With an h-index of 82, he has published more than 700 peer-reviewed articles in the international literature, with over 28,000 citations, and he contributed more than 40 book chapters on various aspects of scientific and clinical gastroenterology. Professor Tack has won several awards for basic and clinical research in gastrointestinal science. He is currently president-elect of the Rome Foundation, a council member of the European Association

Over the last decade, the field of gastroenterology/hepatology has seen a rapid advance of scientific and pathophysiological knowledge. Consequently, more targets and options for treatment have emerged, and they are reshaping therapeutic approaches and outcomes of clinical practice in gastroenterology/hepatology. This issue of *Current Opinion in Pharmacology* highlights several of these new developments in 13 carefully selected articles, written by authors at the forefront of clinical or scientific innovation.

This issue highlights important advances in the pharmacological treatment approaches to common conditions such as refractory gastroesophageal reflux disease, dyspepsia and gastroparesis, irritable bowel syndrome, and (opioid-induced) constipation, as highlighted in several articles. An important innovation of the last decade is the advent of well-controlled studies validating dietary approaches to emerging or highly prevalent gastrointestinal disorders as described in the articles on eosinophilic esophagitis (with elimination diets) and functional bowel disorders (with low FODMAP and other diets).

The gut microbiota is a topic of intense research and are now well-accepted as major players in the generation of gastrointestinal and other disorders. Gut microorganisms are the treatment targets for prebiotic and probiotic as well as faecal microbiota transfer, for which the state of knowledge is summarized in two articles.

Emerging targets for therapeutic innovation, such as stem cells, gastrointestinal peptide hormones, the endocannabinoid system and intestinal mast cells are dealt with in articles that provide an overview of the scientific basis for their use and the most recent therapeutic successes with these approaches. Further challenging is the approach to liver diseases' treatment by targeting gut function, and, in one article, it is reported how novel analogues are able to avoid tumorigenic capacity while maintaining bile acid metabolic action.

We thank all authors for their excellent and high quality contributions. We hope the selection of articles provides a stimulating overview of therapeutic innovation in the field of gastroenterology/hepatology. This should result in better outcomes for the many patients with gastrointestinal or liver disease, where treatment options to date provided insufficient or incomplete control.

for Gastroenterology, Endoscopy and Nutrition, and a member of the Steering Committee of the European Society for Neurogastroenterology and Motility.

Giovanni Sarnelli

Department of Clinical Medicine and Surgery,
University of Naples “Federico II”, Naples,
Italy

Professor Giovanni Sarnelli is currently a Head of Digestive and Nutritional Pathophysiology Unit in the Department of Gastroenterology, Endocrinology and Surgical Endoscopy, a Professor in Gastroenterology of the Department of Experimental Medicine and Surgery at the University of Naples “Federico II”. He graduated *summa cum laude* in 1993 from the University of Naples, and specialized in Gastroenterology at the same institution. During his PhD course Professor Sarnelli served as research fellow at the Leuven University, from 1999 to 2000. Professor Sarnelli’s scientific interest focuses on neurogastroenterology and motility, and includes diverse topics such as the pathophysiology and management of gastrointestinal functional and motor disorders, the physiology of the enteric nervous system, and most recently, on the role of enteric glia in the modulation of gut-brain axis responses and on the pharmacology of endocannabinoids. He has published more than 90 articles and book chapters on various aspects of clinical gastroenterology and translational neurogastroenterology. Professor Sarnelli serves or has served as reviewer, or member of the editorial board for several journals in the field of gastroenterology, pharmacology and multidisciplinary science.