

Preface



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Guest Editor

The growing prevalence of obesity worldwide is an increasing concern surrounding the rising rates of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and the consequent health and financial implications for the population. The association between overweight/obesity and mortality has been well documented. The United States has the highest prevalence rates of obesity (body mass index ≥ 30 kg/m²) worldwide, now exceeding 30%. Even more alarming is the fact that in children and adolescents, overweight prevalence has tripled, which leads to the expectation that by 2035, the prevalence of coronary heart disease will increase significantly in comparison to today's figures. A similar picture can be drawn for many of the countries in Europe and most of the developing countries in the world.

Not surprisingly, therefore, obesity is often described as an epidemic. Thus, it is essential to develop ways for preventing obesity while concomitantly devising efficient treatment strategies. The present and previous issues of *Endocrinology and Metabolism Clinics of North America* are addressing this “call to action” in fighting obesity by encompassing the recent developments in obesity research from a genetic point of view to treatment options. The authors and the editors, in these articles, have tried to balance the most recent and novel findings from the basic molecular aspects, including the lessons that can be learned from monogenic obesity and newly understood mechanisms of hormone secretion and action (such as gastrointestinal hormones that act on the hypothalamus and adipose-associated peptides and cytokines), to clinical applied protocols for therapy. We hope that the reader will benefit from this “translational medicine” approach, and, as a result, the physician, scientist, and ultimately the patients will benefit from this issue—each in his or her point of need. That will be our token effort in fighting obesity.

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