

Editorial

***Respiratory Research*: a new multidisciplinary journal for a new age (<http://respiratory-research.com>)**

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I am delighted to welcome you to the first printed issue of *Respiratory Research*. This new journal, available both on the World Wide Web and in print, will provide timely reviews and rapid publication of primary research in respiratory medicine. The online version of *Respiratory Research* will be the primary place of publication, where articles appear in full, as soon as they are ready for publication. In fact, the journal website (<http://respiratory-research.com>) has been open since June 2000, and many of the articles appearing in this issue have been available online for many weeks. The online environment not only allows information to be widely disseminated, but also provides a forum for discussion and the possibility of rapid feedback. Many helpful comments have already been sent to us, and will be incorporated as the journal develops.

How will this journal help you?

It is true that respiratory medicine is already well served by several specialist journals, but it is also true that it remains difficult to keep track of the overwhelming amount of new information being published. This is particularly the case in rapidly developing fields such as molecular and cell biology and molecular genetics. Many important advances in the basic sciences are of great relevance to respiratory medicine, but are difficult to assimilate, particularly when the developments take place in areas outside respiratory medicine. *Respiratory Research* aims to take a multidisciplinary approach and bring together aspects of basic science that are relevant to clinical respiratory medicine. This will be facilitated by a strong team of 17 internationally recognised Associate Editors, who have each nominated members of the Editorial Board in order to give the widest possible perspective. We hope that this active editorial team will play a decisive role in selecting authors for timely reviews and comments on recently published research from within and outside the field of respiratory medicine. The bringing together of approaches drawn

from many different disciplines, including molecular genetics, molecular and cell biology, biochemistry, physiology, pharmacology, clinical medicine and epidemiology will allow the journal to cover the many areas of research that have an impact on respiratory medicine.

Although the journal is primarily aimed at those involved in academic respiratory research, we hope that it will also be popular with those in clinical respiratory medicine since it will highlight the latest scientific developments relevant to respiratory medicine in an easily digested format. Respiratory medicine is a complicated discipline, as the structure of the lung is highly complex and diverse. This necessitates a wide variety of approaches to understand pulmonary diseases. The relative availability of lung cells for investigation makes this a speciality that is ripe for exploitation by the important new advances in basic science. The ultimate goal is to combat some of the commonest human diseases, many of which are increasing globally. This journal will make the job of keeping abreast of advances in research much easier, by having articles drawn from many fields in one place.

Content

Respiratory Research plans to publish several types of article.

1. Commentaries and editorials on specific topics that are of current interest to our area of research.
2. More extensive and detailed reviews covering important new areas, commissioned to ensure a broad perspective of developments in respiratory medicine.
3. Short paper reports on highly relevant and important papers recently published elsewhere, taking advantage of the speed of the World Wide Web to comment on articles shortly after their publication. These reports will consist of a short summary of the article and an informed comment by the paper reporter.

4. In addition we will publish primary research articles with a fast track peer review process. All primary articles will immediately be listed on the *Respiratory Research* website, in the PubMed Central database (<http://pubmedcentral.com>) and on BioMed Central (<http://biomedcentral.com>), a new website providing free access to the full text of primary articles. The full text of all primary research articles will, therefore, be widely available online free of charge, ensuring that all research findings are easily accessible to the respiratory medicine community. Facilities for users to send comments and feedback on all articles is available online.

Acknowledgement

In setting up the journal I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Dr Jeffery Drazen of Harvard University, who was the North American Editor-in-Chief during the early stages when *Respiratory Research* was being set up. He played a very active and enthusiastic role in choosing the Associate Editors, in establishing the format of the journal and in selecting the articles for the first issues. As most of you know, he has now gone on to become the Editor-in-Chief of the *New England Journal of Medicine* – rapid promotion indeed! We wish him well in his new and important role. I am consequently delighted to announce that Dr Kenneth Brigham of Vanderbilt University has just agreed to become the North American Editor-in-Chief. He brings to the post enormous experience in basic and clinical respiratory research and knowledge of a wide spectrum of respiratory disease.

Feedback

We are keen to obtain your feedback on the format and content of *Respiratory Research* and welcome your suggestions for future commentaries, reviews and paper reports. I believe this journal represents an important innovation in publishing and we hope that it will evolve to take advantage of the latest technological developments available on the World Wide Web. Our rapidly developing field deserves more than just another standard journal, and it is our hope that *Respiratory Research* will become a valuable international forum for interaction between scientists in respiratory medicine.

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