

I N T R O D U C T I O N

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This fifth Meeting on Geriatric Endocrinology held in Parma on March 27-28 2009 was an up-to-date revision of the most recent findings on the tight bi-directional interconnections between aging and endocrine system.

On the one hand, by a pathogenetical point of view, an endocrinological hypothesis of aging has been constructed according to which hormone age related changes play a consistent complementary role in the development of aging phenomena. On the other hand consequently a new clinical approach has been growing up in the last decades founded on the proposal of specific hormones supplementation.

In the first part of the Meeting an extensive review on these specific topics has been performed. Particular attention has been devoted to the issue of "frail elderly", a condition of "impending failure" associated with high risk of disability and rapid deterioration of health; a number of Authors have hypothesized that age-related changes in the levels of various hormones

might contribute to the development of frailty condition, although it is so far unclear whether hormonal changes are the cause or the consequence of aging.

Finally part of the Meeting has been devoted to the "endocrinology of aging male". The clinical consequences of androgen deprivation and the analysis of risk/benefit ratio of Testosterone supplementation have been extensively considered.

In this specific area of clinical research the eyes of physicians and patients look forward to the future in a resolute and hopeful manner. Such expression of resolution and hope is quite well summarized by the image realized by Antelami in the Baptistry of Parma representing an old man with the cloak stirred up to contain the seeds that he is scattering on the ground and that we chose as the logo of this edition of the Meeting.

*Giorgio Valenti  
Gian Paolo Ceda*

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