

Editorial

A Meeting of the Minds

Diabetes and the metabolic syndrome are reaching epidemic proportions in the United States and in many countries around the world. Among the most devastating complications is involvement of the cardiovascular system, with the associated increase in morbidity and mortality. Myocardial infarction, amputations, and strokes are the result of years of underdiagnosed and poorly controlled blood glucose levels, blood pressure, and lipid levels. In addition, lack of insulin effectiveness as a result of either underinsulinization in type 1 diabetes or insulin resistance in type 2 diabetes results in elevations in numerous proinflammatory cytokines and adipocytokines that damage the endothelial and smooth muscle cells of the cardiovascular system.

The recent groundbreaking studies by Greta Van den Berghe have clearly shown that patients in the intensive care unit, with and without diabetes, have considerable hyperglycemia that affects their short-term morbidity and mortality. Intensive insulin therapy can significantly improve outcomes, either by correcting the hyperglycemia and associated deleterious systemic factors or by direct action on tissues.

Thus, the interests of endocrinologists and cardiologists (and intensivists) have converged, as have their understanding and management of these processes. Publication of this special issue of *Insulin* is timely, bringing together like-minded clinicians who present the rationale for use of intensive insulin therapy. Topics include the underlying pathophysiology, practical implementation of treatment, and outcomes from a large cohort of cardiac surgical cases.

Kudos to the guest editor for this wonderful supplement!

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Editors