



## Preface

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The special section dedicated to pulmonary medicine in this issue of *IMAJ* is a source of pride to specialists in the field. Indeed, pulmonary medicine, a relatively "young" subspecialty, has advanced considerably within a few decades, from treating mainly tuberculosis to the varied and multifaceted practice of the modern era.

The articles presented in this issue partly reflect the diverse problems and diseases encountered and treated by the pulmonologist. The study by Izbicki et al. on cardiopulmonary exercise testing in an operated Fallot patient utilized this novel tool to investigate one of the pulmonary vascular diseases, a group of diseases that is currently receiving much attention and generating a huge amount of information. Asthma is the most common disease of the airways, followed by chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Severe asthma attacks necessitate the use of systemic corticosteroids, with devastating side effects. The work by Starobin and co-authors explores a possible inhaled alternative to alleviate these debilitating attacks.

Sarcoidosis is an intriguing immune mediated lung disease affecting the lung parenchyma, with variable anatomical pathological aspects. The diagnostics in pulmonary medicine rely largely on imaging; thus, any progress in the latter has a significant effect on the former. When radiology meets an intriguing disease like sarcoidosis, as in the article by Avital et al., it generates great interest. This article serves as an example of the contribution of imaging to the diagnosis of lung diseases. The normal chest X-ray is still a very important tool in the diagnosis of lung and mediastinal diseases, as reflected in the study by Esayag and colleagues on spontaneous pneumomediastinum.

The role of the moving force of the respiratory system, the neurologically dominated respiratory muscles, is demonstrated by their dysfunction, as described in the article by Ben-Dov and associates on diaphragmatic paralysis. The serious health hazard for passive smokers is emphasized by Rosen and her team and raises again the debate about smoking in public places. The pleura is the outer coating of the lung, which may also be affected by various pathologies. One of the rarest, chylothorax, is described by Maayan and collaborators who also present an original therapeutic solution. The other case reports presented in this special section of *IMAJ* are all of interest and I am sure will enhance our understanding of the specific problems they describe.

Hopefully, these articles will serve as an interesting educational source for the medical community, as well as giving readers the opportunity of glancing at the specialty of pulmonary medicine, albeit through a small window.

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