

## Foreword

The 50th anniversary of the Israel Diabetes Association this year is a time less for celebration than for concern. The prevalence of diabetes is rapidly and alarmingly increasing in westernized and developing countries around the world. Unfortunately, the majority of patients with diabetes do not meet their treatment goals in terms of glucose, blood pressure or lipid levels. Moreover, our clinical experience as well as large longitudinal studies have taught us that the mean glucose levels of diabetic patients tend to increase over the years regardless of the treatment modalities. The appropriate answer to these somewhat frustrating data is that the medical community responsible for the integrated health of our diabetic patients – namely, physicians, researchers, nurses and dieticians – must use its combined resources and available therapeutic tools to optimize treatment for these patients. We should also deepen our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the various forms of diabetes and its complications in order to devise more efficient preventive measures for this prevalent devastating chronic disease.

This issue of *IMAJ* dedicated to diabetes provides some glimpses into these approaches. It contains relevant clinical management dilemmas such as how and when insulin therapy should be instituted and which antihypertensive drugs are more appropriate in the treatment of diabetic nephropathy; a current state-of-the-art review of gestational diabetes as well as how to recognize and manage the diabetic Charcot foot. It exposes the reader to modern prevention strategies against type 1 and type 2 diabetes, to the search for alternative insulin-producing tissue, to advanced understanding of diabetic dermopathy, and more. It also includes selected abstracts of ongoing studies to be presented at the 2004 annual meeting of the Israel Diabetes Association. Most of all, the high quality of the clinical and basic research presented herein strengthens our hope for a better future for our diabetic patients.

### **Micha Rapoport MD (Guest Editor)**

Department of Internal Medicine C and the Diabetes Service  
Assaf Harofeh Medical Center  
Zerifin, Israel

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