

Synopsis of the 2011 Symposium of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society

During December 2-4, 2011, in Athens, Greece, the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society had its biannual Symposium of the Working Groups. This was the 4th Symposium of the Society and more than 1,000 scientists (physicians, biochemists, dietitians, nurses, etc.) attended the 3-day conference. The main topics covered during the sessions included novel approaches on atherosclerosis, biochemistry, lipids metabolism, nutrition and atherosclerosis, gene-nutrient interactions, and environmental effects on atherosclerotic risk. In more detail, topics from all 7 Working Groups of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society were covered during 63 invited presentations, 41 oral and 69 poster presentations:



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1. *Working Group on the Pathophysiology of Atherosclerosis*: Sessions of this WG covered the progression of the scientific research on atherosclerosis, from the experimental models to the human body. Oral presentations from established Greek scientific teams, presenting novel results from *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments, regarding apolipoprotein receptors, new treatments, surgical techniques, and biomarkers, were presented.
2. *Working Group on the Epidemiology and Prevention of Atherosclerosis*: Sessions of this WG emphasized the epidemiology of cardiovascular disease in Europe and the influence of the economic impact on quality of life and public health. Additional topics on prevention of atherosclerosis covered new biomarkers and imaging techniques for the improvement of the diagnostic accuracy of the cardiovascular disease (CVD) models, the differences of CVD primary prevention approaches according to sex, the role of childhood obesity on the future CVD risk, the pre-athletic CVD control, exercise rehabilitation programs in heart failure patients, the role of nursing support of the cardiac patient after hospital discharge, functional foods for the prevention of atherosclerosis, and the role of genes regarding CVD risk.
3. *Working Group on the Metabolic Syndrome*: Sessions of this WG focused on the relation of the metabolic syndrome with type 2 diabetes mellitus, chronic renal disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, sleep apnea, and polycystic ovary syndrome. Furthermore, sessions on new treatment approaches were presented.
4. *Working Group on Familial Hypercholesterolemia*: Sessions of this WG covered novel data on the treatment of familial hypercholesterolemia, the relation between familial hypercholesterolemia and CVD, as well as the development of the condition from infancy. Additionally, the role of structural and functional changes in patients with familial hypercholesterolemia and the influence of mutations on the LDL-cholesterol receptor on the progression of subclinical atherosclerosis were examined and discussed.
5. *Working Group on Hypertension*: Sessions of this WG sought to examine hypertension from the scopes of diagnosis and treatment. Errors and omissions in hypertension treatment, new techniques for the evaluation of blood pressure, treatment of hypertension in diabetic and renal patients, as well as elder subjects were presented.
6. *Working Group on Stroke Prevention*: Sessions of the WG focused on the risk factors for stroke of atherothrombotic origin, risk factor modification on primary and secondary prevention of stroke, and the experience from the Hellenic Stroke Registry.

7. *Working Group on Lifestyle, Psychosocial Factors and Atherosclerosis*: Sessions of this WG focused on the psychosocial components of CVD, the role of lifestyle, social and physical environment, nutrition, physical activity, and psychological determinants.

The 4th Symposium of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society highlighted the impact of CVD risk factors for the development of atherosclerosis, covered various topics, and presented novel data regarding the prevention and treatment of atherosclerosis. Public health providers, physicians, biochemists, nurses, and dieticians should all collaborate together in order to achieve better results in the primary and secondary prevention of CVD and better outcomes concerning the treatment and rehabilitation of the cardiac patients.

The Sessions of the Symposium apart from the novel information presented highlighted the need for future research in the area of atherosclerosis regarding new treatments, the development of more sophisticated biomarkers and imaging techniques, better understanding of the gene influences on CVD, the potential role of nutraceuticals and functional foods regarding CVD prevention and treatment.

Future conferences of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society:

- *27-28 April 2012*: Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society Meeting, Heraclion, Crete, Greece
- *4-5 May 2012*: Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society Meeting, Chalkidiki, Greece
- *5-7 July 2012*: 5th Summer School of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society “Combined Pharmaceutical Therapy for the Treatment of Dyslipidemia, Hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus,” Athens, Greece
- *28-29 September 2012*: Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society Meeting, Porto Heli, Greece
- *28 November – 1 December 2012*: 5th Panhellenic Conference on Atherosclerosis, Athens, Greece