

Welcome address – Introduction to the symposium

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this first symposium on Vascular Endothelium, NO and Hypertension, on behalf of myself, my University and the European Society on Cell and Tissue Engineering and Therapy.

This symposium is a continuation of the four previous symposia organized by our scientific society on “Mechanobiology of Cartilage and Chondrocyte” with a central theme on a current field of research.

Indeed, vascular endothelium plays a significant role in regulating blood flow, and endothelial cells (EC) have highly active metabolic functions. They generate vasoactive mediators like prostacyclin, nitric oxide (NO) and endothelin (ET-1). Endothelial cells also synthesize various proteins like von Willebrand’s factor, growth factors, tissue plasminogen activator, . . . They have also enzymes that inactivate bradykinin and convert angiotensin I into angiotensin II (a vasopressor agent).

In other respects it is now well known that mechanical forces and stretch can modulate EC functions by activating mechano-sensors, signalling pathways, genes and protein expressions. This mechanical approach leads to a better knowledge of vascular remodelling observed in many pathologies.

These different aspects will all be studied during this first symposium.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the participants for their enthusiastic response to my invitation and for their outstanding contributions. I could not finish without expressing my sincere thanks to my University for its patronage which places such emphasis on the interest in these new themes of research. I would also like to thank NEGMA-LERADS Laboratories for their efficient partnership and especially Doctor Martine Burger for her important investment in the organization of this symposium.

Enjoy your stay in Prague.

J.F. Stoltz