



# THE TURKISH JOURNAL OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

## From the Editor

### ■ Human *In Vitro* Disease Models: Dawning a New Era Away from Animal Models

Dear Colleagues,

It is increasingly being recognized that animal models are futile in directing the management of human diseases. For decades a great deal of financial and human resources have been invested in animal models to understand pathogenesis of human diseases and improve the management. However, the ultimate result was utterly disappointing as far as their impact on management is concerned. On the surface, these perfectly designed and implemented studies revealed enormous data. However when it comes to the question, "What did they change"? The response would be virtually "nil".

***Animal experiments will be remembered as a dark stage of human history***

This weekend I am going to talk about "The futility of animal research in gastroenterology" at the "German Doctors Against Animal Experiment" meeting in Cologne. With the help of the medical students from our University headed by Aila Gareayaghi who founded "Medical Students Against Animal Experiments Association", and Taref al Eneze, MD, a visiting

fellow in GE from Syria, we collected data related to animal experiments in gastroenterology. We reviewed around 550 studies involving direct animal experiments between 1997-2005 and assessed their clinical impact in the following 10-15 years. The animal studies themselves were conspicuous. However, when we assessed the clinical reflections in the ensuing 10-15 years, the result was overwhelmingly disappointing. The progress, if it happened, in the relevant field was largely the de-novo result of clinical studies.

The disinterested scientists are very well aware of this fact, and recently chip models of diseases (Wyss Institute) have become very popular. We expect that in the near future this new technology will make animal experiments obsolete and the animal testing will be remembered as a dark stage of human history.

**Hakan Şentürk**  
Editor in Chief