

Foreword

Why a new supplement on Renal Osteodystrophy?

Since the last publication in 1997 of a supplement on renal osteodystrophy of the *Portuguese Journal of Nephrology and Hypertension*, there have been many advances in the knowledge of the underlying mechanisms of bone disease related to kidney insufficiency and also in its classification, diagnosis and therapeutic options.

Taken together, these developments justify the publication of a subsequent supplement designed to show the present face of the constantly changing picture of renal osteodystrophy. In doing so, our concern was always to illustrate that prevention is the primary aim in the management of renal osteodystrophy and that therapy should be initiated early on in the course of renal insufficiency to prevent mineral metabolism disturbances, abnormalities of vitamin D metabolism and parathyroid gland hyperplasia. In other words, preventing bone, mineral and cardiovascular associated disease means actively contributing to improving quality of life and reducing morbidity and mortality in our chronic kidney disease patients. As part of this question, cardiovascular calcification has become more and more of a concern over recent years, with several of its risk factors having been identified. More crucially, new strategies and drugs for managing this problem and improving patient outcomes have emerged, promising

us a brighter future picture.

As such, this supplement focuses on new insights in the field of physiopathology and on new therapeutic options, not all of the latter yet available in Portugal.

Within treatment approaches, there are three areas which are currently attracting immense research and debate. These are new vitamin D analogues, calcimimetic agents and new phosphate binders, and our supplement contributes to informing physicians about the work presently being undertaken in these fields.

We are lucky enough in this supplement to have a series of articles written by some of the world's leading specialists to whom I wish to express my grateful thanks for their kind generosity. The presence of these distinguished names in this supplement greatly enhances the reputation of this Journal and Portuguese Nephrology itself and in addition it is encouraging to see young Portuguese nephrologists who work at an international level here alongside their illustrious colleagues.

Finally, I would like to thank Abbott Laboratories for sponsoring the publication of this supplement.

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Editor-in-Chief