

Editorial

A Letter from the Editor

Molecular diagnostics is an ever-evolving field, and similarly *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics* is continuing to grow and change. You may have noticed that we have increased the frequency of publication, and each issue is more interesting and full than ever before. Now in our seventh year, we look forward to bringing you even better content and expanded services.

Although *JMD* is evolving, our emphasis remains the publication of high-quality, clinically relevant research focusing on the translation of molecular science into the clinical diagnostic setting. Because our field has grown, we are now including studies applicable to the diagnosis, monitoring, prognostic determination, and characterization of solid and hematological tumors, genetic diseases, infectious diseases, and other areas, and using a range of approaches including the analysis of nucleic acids and proteins. Pharmacogenetics is beginning to make its way into our clinical practice, and proteomic approaches are on our horizon. We welcome submissions in these burgeoning fields of study as they apply to molecular diagnostics. Additionally, the *JMD* is including more articles describing studies and techniques that, while not yet ready for clinical application, will keep our readership apprised of new approaches, targets, and trends before they become routine.

With this issue, you will notice the addition of a Technical Advance article category. This new section of the *JMD* is intended to report groundbreaking new approaches and technologies that will be important in our field. This month, we feature three such studies, each of which describes a novel approach that will enable labs to more accurately and rapidly analyze nucleic acids from samples. The first article reports the use of a novel aluminum oxide tube in which nucleic acids can be rapidly isolated and amplified. The second reports and validates the application of a whole genome amplification method to facilitate analysis of DNA in plasma samples, an exciting new approach for the diagnosis of many different diseases. The third Technical Advance examines the performance and reliability of gene expression signatures measured in tissues collected in RNA preserving solution, an important issue as we try to apply expression-based analysis to human tissues collected in pathology.

Additionally, the *JMD* will soon be featuring commentaries to highlight some of the key articles in that current issue of the Journal. Commentaries will be designed to

provide background and context, highlight controversies, and emphasize the importance of the articles they accompany. We will also be bringing you more reviews and minireviews in future issues. The quality and breadth you have come to expect of original research articles in the *JMD* will remain unchanged. In addition to regular articles, each issue will continue to feature the now-familiar Consultations in Molecular Diagnostics. Consultations are short, case-oriented reports meant to illustrate a classic or novel application of a molecular diagnostic approach, a unique observation, interpretive challenge, or technical issue. These will continue to hold great teaching value for those of us practicing molecular diagnostics in the clinical setting.

As quickly as our field evolves, it is ever more important to disseminate published research quickly, broadly, and responsibly. To that end, we are proud to announce the inauguration of JMD_xpress, our online prepublication program that will allow readers to view preprint versions of articles on the Journal's website shortly after the acceptance date, rather than weeks later in the printed Journal. While not the final version of these articles, papers featured on JMD_xpress will have already gone through the rigorous peer-review and first-pass copyediting stage of publication preparation, and will enable readers to get a first look at research on the horizon.

Additionally, we are pleased to announce our new affiliation with PubMed Central (PMC), which will allow research published in the *JMD* to reach an even greater audience. Once published articles are made freely available at the *JMD* website (12 months after publication), article content will also be accessible through the PMC repository. Additionally, our affiliation with PMC should allow us to better assist our authors in cooperating with the National Institutes of Health's Public Access to Research Initiative, announced in May 2005. Through this affiliation, the *JMD* Editorial Office will submit articles to PMC (again, to be made publicly available at 12 months after print publication) on behalf of authors whose articles have been funded by the National Institutes of Health.

In collaboration with the Association for Molecular Pathology and the American Society for Investigative Pathology, the *JMD* is implementing a continuing medical education (CME) program. The *JMD* CME Program in Molecular Diagnostics, which is accredited for 50 CME

credits annually, shares the same basic educational goals as the Journal itself: to help readers grasp the latest advances in understanding the molecular pathogenesis of disease, to learn about new technological advances in molecular diagnosis, and to become familiar with the complexities of diagnostic and prognostic approaches to disease. Beginning this month, each issue will contain articles selected for their particular educational value to the molecular diagnostics community. (A triangular flag in the Table of Contents indicates these articles.) Questions pertaining to these articles are provided in both the print and online versions of the *JMD*. See the back of this issue for the first set of questions. We hope that you will find these exercises useful, not only for earning CME credit,

but also as a basic educational resource for you, your students, residents and fellows, and your laboratory staff.

We continue to look for ways in which we can add value to both your experience of the *JMD* and to the molecular diagnostics community as a whole. Through the continued efforts and commitment of our authors, Editorial Board, and readership, the *JMD* is growing and evolving. We hope you will find these new programs and features useful, and look forward with enthusiasm to the future of *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics*.

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Editor-in-Chief