

A message from President

Dear APMF members:

As the population of most societies around the world ages, it becomes more important to address issues surrounding the menopause. We should, therefore, now reevaluate menopause, from various angles. The major significance of menopause lies in the sequence of events leading from the reproductive to the non-reproductive state. During this transition, diminishing ovarian secretions induce imbalances in mental and physical functions, and sustained estrogen deficiency increases the risk of disease.

Although these biologically programmed processes have a great impact on women, many effects at the early stages are not recognized. But the overt clinical manifestations, some of which may develop into life-threatening conditions, usually appear much later in the elderly. Frequently, it may be impossible to normalize these conditions, even by intensive intervention. In addition to alterations in physical function, many menopausal women undergo stress from the tensions arising between younger and older generations living together in today's complicated society. One can easily infer that impaired physical conditions worsen mental conditions, and *vice versa*.

United Nations statistics show that the proportion of the elderly is dramatically increasing worldwide, particularly in Asia, which underlines the urgent need to establish a comprehensive health care system for menopausal women, both nationally and internationally.

To promote these goals, the Asia Pacific Menopause Federation (APMF) is, rightly, expected to play a key role, promoting better health care and improved quality of life throughout women's lives, including menopause, and also for men.

To optimize health care systems, there is a need for a new type of awareness of the mental and physical alterations associated with menopause, not only amongst the women affected, but also in society at large. The support of such systems will enable elderly women to have a significantly improved quality of life for the three decades of their lives which typically follow menopause.

As we move into the future, the major task of APMF is to develop a strategy, based on a collective worldwide wisdom, to promote healthier lives, which is a vital, component of global and multi-disciplinary approaches to women's health care. Such a holistic approach is needed to confront the issues of healthy aging, based on human dignity and quality of life.

Since its establishment in 1999, the APMF has organized scientific meetings every three years, and in 2013 will hold the 5th APMF Congress, hosted by the Japan Society for

Menopause and Women' Health, in Tokyo. The societies which organized the 4 previous scientific meetings have made great contributions, promoting academic activities, enhancing communication, and strengthening ties and friendship among APMF members, nationally and individually.

The APMF home page makes available up-dated information from APMF members and others which stimulates scientific advance. The efforts of the Federation's headquarters in this regard are greatly appreciated, and every member is encouraged to submit the results of studies, and so to share information via this system.

In addition to our current activities, I wish to propose a new project, based on the active contribution of all members. The collaborative project proposed is intended to clarify the causal relationship between lifestyle and health problems. Our Federation covers a broad area, in which people live in ethnically diverse conditions. Each country has a traditional advantage in preventing some health problems and, conversely, weaknesses or risk factors, relating to other specific diseases and disorders. To achieve our mission to develop health care strategy, the aim of this project is to make it possible to share information about these factors, so improving the quality of all our lives. The administration of this project will be discussed at the council meeting. It is a realistic hope that collaboration of this kind will enhance the overall effectiveness of our Federation. The participation in this project of all member societies is much hoped for, and we look forward to all your suggestions and comments.

Takeshi Aso, MD. PhD

President of Asia Pacific Menopause Federation

June, 2011