

Welcome to Advances in Pediatric Research

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Abstract

Pediatric health care covers all aspects of the well being of infants, children and adolescents. The need to address medical issues that are specific to this age group was recognized several centuries ago, and pediatrics has now evolved into a number of sub-specialties that focus on the multitude of prominent health issues that affect wellbeing during the early years of life. Although pediatric medicine has led to striking improvements in medical care from birth through to adolescence, a range of important health issues remain a concern, while the changing global landscape continues to deliver additional health challenges that need to be addressed.

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Editorial

From birth to adolescence, humans are faced with a plethora of health issues that can greatly affect their physical and mental wellbeing, as well as their long-term development and potential in adulthood. Many of these issues are specific to the different physiology of this age group relative to adults, while others can be due to congenital defects that first surface early in life. In addition to diagnosing and treating childhood diseases, pediatrics also involves ensuring normal physical and mental development.

While the need for a medical discipline that is dedicated to addressing childhood pathologies has been clear for a long time, the importance of taking into account the environmental and social influences that can have a major impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of children and adolescents is becoming increasingly recognized. Major advances in pediatrics, ranging from improved neonatal health care to changes in adolescent behavior, are thought to not only have led to a precipitous drop in child deaths

(particularly so in the developed world), but also a substantial increase in longevity [1]. Nonetheless, it is now generally thought that environmental factors that appear to be inherent in modern society have triggered a new and burgeoning health crisis among the youth of today. The adverse effects of these environment-induced physiological changes have the capacity to negate many of the health benefits that have contributed to the increase in longevity [2]. In light of the potential for long-term propagation of these deleterious health effects by epigenetic changes [3], the importance of addressing these influences early in life should not be underestimated.

Following on from the important health gains achieved through advances in neonatal care and protection from infectious childhood diseases, there therefore remains ample potential for pediatric medicine to continue to deliver a multitude of important health benefits. Notably, advancements in the understanding of the molecular basis of childhood diseases, ranging from monogenic pathologies to pediatric tumors, have led to new avenues for the identification and development of improved

treatments to curb the adverse impacts of these often devastating conditions [4].

Unlike most other age groups, children cannot advocate for themselves. They hence represent a most vulnerable patient group that is reliant on advocacy by the medical profession itself. Consequently, in an effort to further promote child healthcare, this journal wishes to add to this voice by facilitating the publication of research findings, clinical results and medical opinions relating to pediatric medicine. In light of the numerous diverse factors that impact on the early years of life, there is ample scope to further improve pediatric care at many levels.

Our mission, therefore, is to provide biomedical researchers and clinicians further opportunity to disseminate their findings regarding developments of relevance to pediatric health care. The principal aim of this journal is to publish articles from all areas of the full spectrum of health issues that impact this age group.

All submitted articles will be screened initially by a member of the journal's Editorial Board and, if found to be suitable, will be sent out for peer-review to internationally recognized experts in pediatrics. Accepted articles will be of the highest quality and can take the form of original research articles, reviews and commentaries providing pertinent, cutting edge up-dates in a focused area of pediatrics. These can be in any field of research related to the health, well-being and development of infants, children or adolescents, such as the identification of rare genetic factors associated with congenital conditions, the clinical testing of novel treatments for pediatric cancers, or studies relating to social and environmental factors that affect mental development.

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