

23rd International Conference on

HERBAL AND ALTERNATIVE REMEDIES FOR DIABETES AND ENDOCRINE DISORDERS

November 02-04, 2017 Bangkok, Thailand

From pathophysiology to therapy: Why herbal medicine, when and for what?

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The diabetes field has experienced several major and spectacular changes in our knowledge over the last decade. In particular epidemiological studies as well as results from large-scale clinical trials have challenged the classical views. Regrettably these novelties have rather been at odd with previous traditional views. Thus these studies not only revealed that treating established has at best limited effects on cardiovascular outcome but they also showed that lifestyle measures in prediabetic patients have essentially failed as compared with logical expectations. Thus one comes to the conclusion that the earlier the better. This implies to detect the subjects at risk and to find alternative therapeutic and preventive measures. The identification of early pathological changes leading to insulin resistance long before diabetes installs shows that low grade chronic inflammation and oxidative stress are among the most important causes. Today we know the origins of these deleterious mechanisms. Therefore intervening as early as possible with potent herbal compounds targeting these mechanisms appears to be a promising method. There is nowadays clearly increasing awareness of this problem but it will require another decade at best to see if phytochemicals fulfill the large expectations we put on them.

Biography

Nicolas F Wiernsperger is a French Physiologist and Pharmacologist. He has been Head of Research Department on Cerebrovascular Accidents at Novartis, Switzerland until 1984. He established as a world recognized Specialist of Microcirculation. From 1985 to 2005, he was appointed as the Head of International Pharmacological Development and Senior Pharmacologist at Merck KgA in Lyon. He was also the Head of a private/public research unit on Diabetes Microvascular Complications at Lyon University. He is an international recognized expert of cardiometabolic diseases and aging. He has published nearly 150 papers as well as 2 books. He has been teaching as Invited Professor at several universities. Since 2005, he deals with the development of new drugs as well as, more recently, nutraceuticals.

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