Special Issue

New Insights into Channelopathies

Message from the Guest Editors

Several gastrointestinal (GI) tract abnormalities, including visceral hypersensitivity, motility, and intestinal permeability alterations, have been implicated in functional GI disorders (FGIDs). Ion channels play a crucial role in all these functions. Channelopathies in gastroenterology are gaining a strong interest, and the evidence of co-relationships is increasing. For instance, mutations in the ABCC7/CFTR gene have been described as a cause of constipation and diarrhea, whereas mutations of the SCN5A gene are instead associated with irritable bowel syndrome. Furthermore, mutations of the TRPV1 and TRPA genes manifest hypersensitivity and visceral pain in sensory nerves. Recently, mice and humans affected by Cantu syndrome, which is associated with mutations of the KCNJ8 and ABCC9 genes encoding for the Kir6.1 and SUR2 subunits, showed severe dysfunction of contractility throughout the intestine. The discovery of a correlation between channelopathies and FIGDs opens new avenues for discovering new direct drug targets for specific channelopathies, holding significant implications for diagnosing and treating functional GI diseases.

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