



LUNG Year in Review: 2020

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The journal *LUNG* has been in continuous publication since 1903. Established as a German-language publication, *LUNG* transformed to an exclusively English-language journal in the 1970s. The journal continues to enjoy an international readership as well as manuscript submissions from authors worldwide.

The year 2020 marked the retirement of Editor-in-Chief F. Dennis McCool, MD, under whose 17-year stewardship *LUNG* continued to grow, flourish, and firmly establish itself as a leading journal in the space of pulmonary medicine. Manuscript submissions to the journal have steadily increased in quantity and quality, thus resulting in our current acceptance rate of submitted manuscripts of under 15%. Although full-year data were not yet available at the time of this writing, journal article downloads in 2020 were on track to far exceed the 117,349 article downloads of 2019.

At the beginning of 2020 I had the honor of assuming the role of Editor-in-Chief of *LUNG*. The journal and I owe Dr. McCool a great debt for his many years of outstanding service, and for facilitating a smooth transition for me and other new members of the editorial team. A positive aspect of any change in leadership is that it allows for evaluation, reflection, and establishment of new strategies for ongoing success. To that end, among my first actions as Editor-in-Chief was to bring on an outstanding group of Associate Editors who comprise a truly international body of expertise in the various fields within pulmonary and critical care medicine. We have no doubt that the intellectual energy, creativity, and enthusiasm of this new group of renowned clinicians and scientists will continue to move the journal forward in a positive trajectory.

In terms of specific goals, we aim to publish at least one State-of-the-Art review article in each edition of the journal. State-of-the-Art reviews are comprehensive reviews on

a specific topic written by experts in the field. Such articles are typically invited, however, outstanding, unsolicited reviews will be considered as well. In 2020, we were pleased to publish 15 State-of-the-Art reviews [1–15] within our six issues. In keeping with our goal of enhancing the critical care content within the journal, publications in 2020 included a State-of-the-Art review of lung ultrasound in the assessment and management of acute respiratory failure [1], as well as articles reporting vaping-induced acute respiratory failure [16]; the use of diaphragmatic ultrasound to facilitate liberation from mechanical ventilation [17]; intensive care unit (ICU) utilization practices for patients with COPD [18]; biomarkers in sepsis-associated acute lung injury [19]; and optimal ventilator management during extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) [20].

The year 2020 witnessed a pandemic of COVID-19-related manuscript submissions to medical journals, and *LUNG* was not immune to the onslaught. As of December 31, 2020, a National Library of Medicine (PubMed) search of the term “COVID-19” yielded over 88,000 articles. We at *LUNG* were very selective in our acceptance of SARS-CoV-2-related manuscripts, since most submissions were retrospective, descriptive series of patients, often small in number and not contributing to the extant published literature. Four notable exceptions included the first study reporting an association of COVID-19 outcome with levels of surfactant protein D [21]; a study of the effect of COVID-19 on patients with sarcoidosis [22]; a State-of-the-Art review on the relevance of the ACE-2 receptor in SARS-CoV-2 infection [14]; and an editorial examining chronic cough as a residual effect of the illness [23].

We were delighted that in 2020, pediatric pulmonology was well represented within the pages of our journal. In addition to featuring a State-of-the-Art review on the evaluation and management of children with obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSAS) [5], we published studies on cystic fibrosis (CF) [24–26] and non-CF-related pediatric topics [27–29]. We remain eager to publish high-quality articles in the field of pediatric respiratory medicine, and encourage

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authors working in this area to consider submission of their highest quality work to *LUNG*.

As would be expected, studies in obstructive airways disease comprised a large portion of our published articles. New aspects of pathophysiology and diagnosis of asthma were described in both clinical and basic investigations [30–37]. In keeping with historical precedent, COPD-related research played a prominent role in each issue of the journal [18, 38–50].

Pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) continues to be among the most active fields of inquiry in respiratory medicine. In addition to a State-of-the-Art review of treatment guidelines for PAH [7], we published a number of studies exploring clinical aspects of this condition [51–56].

Fueled by the recent availability of therapeutic options, investigative work in the areas of interstitial lung disease (ILD) and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) proceeds with enthusiasm. Reflecting the emergence of information in this field, *LUNG* featured three relevant State-of-the-Art reviews [6, 8, 10], as well as an eclectic selection of clinical studies [56–62].

The greatest amount of current research in pulmonary medicine is undoubtedly committed to the study of lung cancer. New discoveries and insights are emerging at a remarkable rate. Participating in the dissemination of this plethora of information, *LUNG* published a State-of-the-Art review on new developments in the management of non-small cell lung cancer [15] as well as a collection of articles examining lung cancer epidemiology, screening, multidisciplinary management, surgical intervention, prognosis, and outcomes [63–74].

Emerging as one of the most prolific areas of investigation in pulmonary medicine is the field of sleep disorders. In 2020, we published two articles on pediatric obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSAS) [5, 27], including a State-of-the-Art review on the evaluation and management of children with OSAS [5]. Studies in adult OSAS included therapy [79], adherence [76], risk of occupational injury [78], and possible associated biomarkers [75, 77, 80].

LUNG has historically given prominent attention to the important topic of cough. Cough is the most common complaint for which persons in the United States seek medical attention [81]. Thankfully, the last decade has seen a great increase in cough-related research which has led to multiple antitussive drug development programs currently underway [9]. Cough-related articles featured in 2020 included State-of-the-Art reviews on the placebo effect in cough clinical trials [2], the role of excipients in antitussive preparations [11], and an update on the status of chronic cough in China [3]. Other topics covered were drug-associated cough [82], therapeutic strategies for chronic cough [79, 83], the role of cough assessment in monitoring patients with asthma [36] and COPD [47], the question of whether there will be an

emergence of a post-COVID-19 chronic cough [23], and abstracts from the Seventh American Cough Conference [84].

The field of lung transplantation was addressed in a State-of-the-Art review of infectious complications in this patient population [13], while other articles examined post-transplant bronchiolitis obliterans syndrome in CF patients [85] as well as cytomegalovirus reactivation in lung transplant recipients [86].

Interventional pulmonology and thoracic surgery received deserved attention, with multiple articles addressing the evolving field of bronchoscopic lung volume reduction surgery [87–89], as well as percutaneous interventions [59, 90], and surgical procedures [12, 74, 91]. Other contributions addressed aspects of respiratory physiology [29, 89, 92], pulmonary rehabilitation [93, 94], tuberculosis [95], non-tuberculous mycobacterial infection [96], and World Trade Center-related lung disease [97].

Basic science provides the foundation from which clinical progress results. In 2020, we were pleased to publish several quality preclinical trials in the area of acute lung injury [98–101] as well as studies pertaining to asthma [32], lung cancer [66], cystic fibrosis [102, 103], pulmonary fibrosis [104], and mechanisms of pulmonary drug delivery [105].

The year 2020 was an exciting and productive one at *LUNG*. We look forward to ongoing progress at our journal. To achieve that goal, we will continue to rely on our colleagues worldwide, working at the bedside and in the laboratory, to contribute their quality work to *LUNG*.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest Peter Dicipinigitis, MD, is the Editor-in-Chief of *LUNG*. No other conflicts of interest related to the content of this editorial.

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