

The Menopause: Clinical, Endocrinological and Pathophysiological Aspects

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and S. S. C. Yen

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PREFACE

Nowadays the human life-span is longer than ever before, so that more than one third of living women are of climacteric or postclimacteric age; what's more, women's importance in the socio-economic and cultural fields is also greater. Consequently, troubles related to the menopause are the object of ever-increasing interest. Therefore the Congress at Viareggio, a pretty town by the sea near Pisa (Italy), was organized to review present knowledge about medical and non-medical problems at the climacterium.

Investigators, psychologists, sociologists, sexologists and andrologists from all over the world have studied the physiological, pathological, clinical and psychological aspects which characterize the pre- and postmenopausal period in the life of women and aging males.

Anatomy, metabolism, endocrinology and, in general, the physiological homeostasis of the female organism at this stage were all examined. Subsequently pathological alterations were discussed in relation to their frequency during the climacterium. Therefore many of the presentations discussed cardiovascular diseases, alterations of calcium metabolism, low urinary tract diseases and breast and endometrial pathology. Psychological problems were also examined with regard to social and sexological behaviour; moreover, their role in the common complaints of postmenopausal women was the object of discussion. The usefulness of current therapy and the risk/benefit ratio was subsequently evaluated. In particular, it was found that non-steroidal agents seemed to represent an interesting therapeutic approach.

Apart from the many reports, we are grateful to all those who contributed to the success of the Congress, mainly the members of the Scientific Committee, who supplied us with the best advice with particular regard to the Symposium programme. We gratefully acknowledge our Sponsors' contributions and the Serson Symposia and Biodata for their help in the organization. We also wish to express our appreciation to the members of the Local Organizing Committee (A. M. Paoletti, V. Mais, M. Gambacciani, F. Menchini-Fabris, M. Mariani, F. Strigini, F. Fruzzetti and G. Guarnieri) who were helpful during both the Congress and its preparation.

It is our hope that this volume, which contains papers from all the different speakers, will be useful to investigators of the climacterium and to women who will be helped to face this period of their lives more positively.

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