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Paneth cell alpha-defensins as novel biotherapeutic agents

Since their introduction into human medicine, antibiotics have had an enormous impact on the treatment of infectious diseases and the success of invasive medical procedures such as surgery and chemotherapy. Unfortunately, use of these drugs is being questioned due to the emergence of resistance to these agents among a broad variety of bacterial species which is perceived as a global public-health problem. Thus, the scientific interest has now been diverted to the development of safer and more effective agents such as probiotics, herbs/herbal products and antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) from prokaryotic as well as eukaryotic origin. Among naturally occurring AMPs, defensins form a unique family of cysteine-rich cationic polypeptides with 3–4 disulfide bridges. Mouse enteric alpha-defensins, present in Paneth cell apical granules are called cryptdins (for crypt defensins). Human Paneth cells code for two α -defensins (HD-5 and HD-6) while six alpha-defensins (cryptdins 1-6) have been characterized from murine small intestine. Recently, cryptdin-2 has been found to be efficacious against *Salmonella enterica* serovar Typhimurium, *Yersinia enterocolitica* as well as *Entamoeba histolytica*, thereby, making it a potential broad spectrum biotherapeutic agent. Moreover, when used in conjunction with conventional antibiotics, it lowers down the effective dose of the antibiotic, which may reduce the chances of emergence of drug resistance along with associated side effects besides conferring health benefits to the host.

Achievements by GISI Members

Prof. (Mrs.) S.V. Rana, Dept. of Gastroenterology, PGIMER, Chandigarh.

1. Selected for **Astra Zeneca Oration** to be delivered during ISGCON 2012.
2. Presented the paper entitled “**Incidence of small intestinal bacterial overgrowth in adults and children patients with celiac disease**” at International Society of Primary Immunodeficiency diseases held at New Delhi from 5th-6th March, 2012.

Prof. Chetana Vaishnavi, Dept. of Gastroenterology, PGIMER, Chandigarh.

1. Delivered an invited guest talk on “*Clostridium difficile*, the new global bioterrorist!” during the symposium on Anti Infectives Drug Discovery India 2012 at Hyderabad during March 20-21, 2012.
2. Participated as Chief Panel Discussant for the session on 'Infectious Diseases' during the symposium on Anti - Infectives Drug Discovery India 2012 at Hyderabad during March 20-21, 2012.

GISI Newsletter

GISI members are encouraged to send in their feedback, queries and news of their achievements to be included in the GISI newsletter.

**Dr.(Mrs.) Praveen Rishi FAMI, FABMS
Professor
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cc to c.vaishnavi@rediffmail.com**

Announcements

1. A directory of Life Members of GISI is proposed to be printed along with brief Curriculum Vitae. Therefore you are requested to send in your complete personal details along with your Qualifications, Position, Achievements, Awards and photographs which can be updated on the GISI website under your page.
2. Indian Life Members desirous of receiving Certificate of Membership may send a Demand Draft of INR 250/- in advance / Foreign Members may send USD 25/- in favour of “Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India”, payable at Chandigarh, addressed to Prof. C. Vaishnavi, Dept. of Gastroenterology, PGIMER, Chandigarh – 160012, India. Kindly quote your LM No. along with the request.
3. Next issue of the ‘Journal of Gastrointestinal Infections’ has been published by the society and will be mailed shortly to all the GISI members.
4. Also, please log on to www.gisi.in for detailed information about the society.

GASTROINTESTINAL INFECTION SOCIETY OF INDIA



MICROBIOLOGY DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF SUPERSPECIALTY OF GASTROENTEROLOGY
POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH, CHANDIGARH.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Please type or write in Capital Letters)

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Note: Membership is open to Clinical Microbiologists / Gastroenterologists / Clinicians and Health Care Workers involved in Gastrointestinal Infections.

	Life Membership	
Institutions		INR 3000/-
Patrons		INR 20,000/- and above
Individuals (India)		INR 1500/-
Individuals (Foreign)		USD 200/-

Drafts should be drawn in favour of "**Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India**".

Mode of Payment Cash/D.D. (Bank) _____ (Branch) _____
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Membership form and the draft should be mailed to Dr.Chetana Vaishnavi, Professor, Division of Microbiology, Department of Gastroenterology, PGIMER, Chandigarh. Mobile No. 09417002682, Email: cvaishnavi@rediffmail.com