
EDITORIAL

Dengue fever is an endemic disease that has been increasingly affecting large parts of the world and is related to the haphazard development of urban centers, poverty, heavy rainfalls and the proliferation of vector *Aedes*.

Despite the constant concern demonstrated by the health authorities where dengue is endemic, the results are disappointing when attempting to control the disease through known mechanisms, in addition to the severe forms of the disease with the presence of different serotypes of dengue virus and the resulting increase in deaths due to a hospital structure not prepared for the large number of patients that arrive within a short period of time.

Worried about this discouraging scenario and motivated by the potential launching of an effective vaccine that can help to fight dengue fever, the Medical School of Universidade de São Paulo (USP), sponsored by the pharmaceutical company Sanofi Pasteur, organized an international symposium on dengue fever in the city of São Paulo, in October 2011, with various dengue experts that gathered for knowledge change as well as to discuss the present dengue scenario in Brazil.

This issue of *Revista do Instituto de Medicina Tropical de São Paulo* is devoted to outline the presentations and discussions during the symposium, aiming to recall such an important event.

It is important to highlight the epidemiology context, noting that Brazil is the country that reports the largest number of cases of dengue fever in the world with an impressive increase in the number of cases in the last decade, that is to say, the increase in the number of hospitalizations per 100,000 inhabitants from 4 to 49.7 from 1998 to 2010; the seven-fold increase in the diagnosis of hemorrhagic dengue fever from 1990 to 2010, which, associated to the circulation of a new dengue virus serotype (dengue 4), shows the uncomfortable situation we are now facing.

Naturally, new advances in the research and development area, when properly standardized, help providing prompt diagnostic and quick action to reduce the risks of severe forms of dengue fever.

In the clinical area, it became evident that it would be essential to adapt World Health Organization (WHO) classification (International Classification of Diseases - ICD) regarding the increasing diversity of clinical manifestations and the most tormenting evolution of dengue fever. It was also mentioned the health care

model adopted in the city of Campos dos Goytacazes, in Rio de Janeiro, with a Center for Reference on Dengue, which allows the procedures standardization and coordination of programmatic actions.

Several presentations on the vaccine are highlighted – the long-awaited novelty as an additional action for dengue control: the excellent national immunization program adopted in Brazil and which road to take toward a new vaccine, a model for the right age for vaccination, and the presentation on the state-of-the-art of CYD tetravalent dengue vaccine developed by Sanofi Pasteur.

I am sure the presentations herein, which outline the symposium, will serve the purpose of every reader interested in this matter, also disseminating information on such an important endemic disease in our country.

Prof. Marcos BOULOS
Department of Infectious Diseases
Faculty of Medicine”
University of São Paulo