ABOUT THE ENDOCRINE SOCIETY

WHAT IS THE ENDOCRINE SOCIETY?

We are the oldest and largest global professional membership organization representing the field of endocrinology. We are entering our second century energized by the promise of unravelling the mysteries of hormone disorders. Our members care for patients and are dedicated to advancing hormone research and excellence in the clinical practice of endocrinology. These expert scientists and physicians shape the genesis and delivery of patient care from bench to bedside to well-being.

Our more than 18,000 members are in 122 countries and include scientists, physicians, educators, nurses, and students. Our headquarters is at 2055 L Street NW, Washington, DC, located near organizations influencing science and health policy.

WHAT IS ENDOCRINOLOGY?

Endocrinology is the study and treatment of diseases and disorders related to the human body's endocrine glands, which secrete hormones. Hormones affect nearly every cell and organ of the human body and play a pivotal role in many of the most debilitating disorders of our time, including diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, infertility, and thyroid conditions.

The human body's system of glands and the hormones produced by these glands is called the endocrine system. The endocrine system is essential for bodily functioning, survival, and life itself. The glands that are part of the body's endocrine system include ovaries, testes, hypothalamus, pituitary, thyroid, thymus, liver, stomach, duodenum, adrenal, and kidney.

WHAT IS AN ENDOCRINOLOGIST?

Endocrinologists are medical doctors, basic scientists, or clinical scientists who study and treat diseases and disorders of the endocrine system, individual glands, or the hormones that are secreted by these glands.

Our members are often described as medical detectives and puzzle-solvers who connect the dots in complicated cases that are difficult to diagnose. They are frequently the go-to experts who receive the toughest cases referred by other doctors.

WHY IS ENDOCRINOLOGY IMPORTANT?

Every chronic disease of the 21st century has a link to hormonal issues, making endocrinologists indispensable to other physicians, patients, and policymakers who depend upon their unique training, expertise, and perspective.

Historically, endocrinologists have revolutionized the field of healthcare, transforming diseases like Type 1 diabetes from a death sentence to a disease that can be managed. Whether it is the discovery and commercialization of insulin, the discovery of cortisone, or the discovery of the estrogen receptor, the breakthroughs of endocrinologists shape treatments that enhance the lives of tens of millions of patients worldwide.

Endocrine Society
2055 L Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036
T. 202.971.3636 F. 202.736.9705
endocrine.org

ENDOCRINE SOCIETY | 1916-2016 100 YEARS OF HORMONE SCIENCE TO HEALTH

ENDOCRINE SOCIETY POLICY PRIORITIES

Recruiting and Retaining the Workforce to Ensure Patient Access to Endocrinologists

With the growing epidemic of diabetes, obesity, and other endocrine conditions, there is an urgent need to recruit and retain endocrinologists to care for the millions who are affected. It is now typical for patients to encounter wait times of three to nine months and many endocrinology practices are no longer accepting new patients. Further, it can take a hospital or major medical center from one to three years to recruit an endocrinologist. We support expansion of the number of fellowship slots and new care models that encourage the use of allied health professionals working with endocrinologists.

Improving Quality Care

In a new system focused on improving quality and reducing costs, endocrinologists will be a key member of the care team, coordinating care for patients with co-morbidities to ensure effective transitions of care, and provision of care to accepted standards of care. As the federal government moves forward in overhauling the Medicare payment system, it is vital that physicians are incentivized for providing the highest standards of care while preventing unnecessary expenditures. Non-face-to-face and telehealth services should be covered by Medicare to assist with this goal, and evaluation and management services should be revalued to account for cognitive work.

Increasing Biomedical Research Funding

Endocrine scientists funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) continue to make remarkable contributions in areas of critical national interest, including diabetes, obesity, the microbiome, cancer, bone health, and fertility. Further progress, however, depends on adequate federal support. The opportunities to cure many diseases and conditions will decrease in the years ahead as the federal government's investment in biomedical research declines due to inflation and inadequate funding levels. We recommend at least $35 billion for the NIH in FY 2017 to make up for years of flat and under-funding; and to maintain America's status as a leading research engine.

Addressing the Global Diabetes and Obesity Epidemics

More than 26 million Americans have diabetes and more than 1/3 are obese. Better preventive care is needed to identify and effectively treat those who are affected before the condition worsens or costly complications develop. Access to intensive behavioral counseling and the necessary diabetes supplies are crucial to support these efforts. To provide integrated care for people who have diabetes and who may be at risk of developing costly and related medical problems, the US health care system must also continue researching and building effective multi-disciplinary care team models.

Reducing Harmful Exposure to Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)

EDCs are chemicals that can cause adverse health effects by interfering with hormones in the body. EDCs are found in everyday products and throughout the environment. The evidence is more definitive than ever before that EDCs disrupt hormones in a manner that harms human health. We are highly engaged in global policy efforts to reduce harms due to exposures from EDCs.

Endocrine Society
2055 L Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036
T. 202.971.3636 F. 202.736.9705
endocrine.org

ENDOCRINE SOCIETY | 1916-2016 100 YEARS OF HORMONE SCIENCE TO HEALTH