

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to reach the first issue of 2013. First of all, I wish a happy New Year to all my colleagues and their families, and I wish the New Year to bring happiness, health and peace. As you know, we have first published the missing issues from 2005, and then we have made an effort to ensure that the journal is published regularly. Our journal is still included in the TÜBİTAK ULAKBİM Turkish Medical Series. We have also made a great effort for our journal to be included in the PubMed and SCI expanded lists. Although we have not had a positive progression yet, I would like to indicate that we feel hopeful about that. For this purpose, it seems that certain conditions have to be met, including increased citation of the articles in our journal, and, if possible, all the articles should be in English. According to the decision taken last month by the TOD Board of Management, our journal will no longer be published in print, due to economic reasons, and will only be found electronically. Therefore, this is the last issue to be published in print. I would like to greatly thank everyone who has contributed, especially Rekamay Publishing and its owner Ahmet Hagur.

There are five research articles in this issue. Three of them are epidemiological studies. The first analyzes the scoliosis prevalence in congenital heart patients, the second studies the prevalence of transitional vertebrae in 500 soldiers, and the third examines lumbosacral junction abnormalities in 5000 males between the ages of 18 and 20. The fourth study is a comprehensive analysis of intraspinal abnormalities in congenital and neuromuscular scoliosis, which includes the surgical reports of patients who had previous neurosurgery and had serious scoliosis. The final study analyzes lumbar pseudoarthrosis and its reasons. I think that all these studies will greatly interest the readers.

In this issue, there are also two case studies. The first discusses the treatment of a case with a late vertical central sacrum break. In the second case study, two siblings with Escobar syndrome are presented.

Additionally, there is a review in this issue. This review discusses the genetic basis of degenerative disc disease, and it will greatly contribute to our readers' knowledge.

Our "*Frontiers of Spinal Surgery*" section also continues in this issue, which includes the biography of Prof. Dr. Nurhan Avam. Prof. Dr. Sait Naderi prepared this article.

The first four of the "Marmara Spinal Group Meetings" were successfully completed. These meetings include Istanbul and neighboring cities and are conducted in order to increase interest and contribute to training in spinal surgery, particularly for assistants and new specialists, and to transfer the experiences of experienced colleagues. They will be organized regularly each month, and this year I will perform the headship and Surgeon Mehmet Aydoğan will perform the secretariat. Prof. Dr. Muharrem Yazıcı gave his talk entitled "*Diagnosis and treatment algorithm in growing vertebra deformations*" in October at the meeting hosted by S.B. Baltalimanı Training and Research Hospital; I gave my talk entitled "*Diagnosis and treatment algorithm in spinal infections*" at Hisar Hospital in November, and finally Prof. Dr. Emre Acaroğlu, our TOD organization head, will give his speech entitled "*Diagnosis and treatment algorithm in adult deformations*" at Medipol University Bağcılar Hospital in December. I greatly thank all of the participants.

We are continuing to answer the STE questions in this issue, which we publish in accordance with the request from TOTBİD TOTEK for recertification. The answers to the questions included in this issue should be sent to the addresses cutku@ada.net.tr or admin@jtss.org.tr, which are also indicated on the page that includes the questions. Answers received will be sent by us to the relevant secretariat in TOTBİD TOTEK.

We wish a New Year filled with health, success and peace to the Turkish Spinal Surgery family, and we present our deepest respects.

Prof. Dr. İ. Teoman BENLİ
JTSS Editor Assistant