

## PREFACE

Colorectal cancer (CRC) appears at the molecular level and in terms of treatment effectiveness and survival, respectively, to be a heterogeneous disease. A majority of CRCs are sporadic and believed to be influenced by diet, lifestyle, environmental factors, and acquired somatic mutations. To emphasize this complexity regarding the CRC incidence, pathogenesis and complexity in diagnosis and treatments, the 1<sup>st</sup> scientific meeting titled *Tumors of the Gastrointestinal Tract: Colorectal Cancer* was organized on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014 by the Croatian Academy of Science and Arts, Department of Medical Sciences, and by the School of Medicine of the University of Zagreb, Department of Clinical Oncology. The Organizing Committee comprised the following members of the Department of Clinical Oncology: Prof. Lidija Bekeć-Orešković, MD, PhD, Prof. Nikola Đaković, MD PhD, Prof. Antonio Juretić, MD, PhD, Academy President Prof. Zvonko Kusić, MD, PhD, and Prof. Fedor Šantek, MD, PhD.

The aim of this meeting was to recapitulate the data which indicate that CRC is a heterogeneous group of tumors. The topics presented at this meeting were the following: CRC incidence, importance of optimal nutrition, molecular pathogenesis, novel diagnostic procedures and algorithms, pathohistological recommendations and algorithms, surgical approaches, systemic therapy, radiation therapy, drug pharmacogenomics and patient pharmacogenetics, therapy side-effects, and the importance of a multidisciplinary team in making therapeutic decisions and in taking care of patients.

Regretfully, not all papers and all presentations are included in this issue, but most of them are. We hope that the papers presented will provide the readers with sufficient information for better understanding of colorectal cancer incidence, pathogenesis, diagnosis and treatment options in a clinical setting.

On behalf of the Organizing Committee,  
Antonio Juretić