

A special issue on “Interferons, Cytokines, and Immunity”

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Vertebrates including human employ both innate and adaptive immune responses to defend against pathogen infections and malignancy. Interferons and cytokines play pivotal roles in mediating and coordinating diverse aspects of the host immune response responsible for the clearance of infection and elimination of malignant cells. In addition, abnormal immune and/or inflammatory responses are closely linked to the pathogenesis of various human diseases such as infections, autoimmune diseases and cancer. Thus, a better understanding of these signaling pathways is essential to our efforts in developing more effective regimes to prevent and treat infectious diseases as well as to combat autoimmune diseases and cancer.

In conjunction with the successful hosting of the 2005 Annual Meeting of the International Society for Interferon and Cytokine Research (ISICR) in Shanghai (10/20 - 10/24/2005), *Cell Research* is pleased to bring to our readers a special issue on “Interferon, Cytokine, and Immunity.” This entire Special Issue includes 22 articles (17 reviews and 5 research articles) contributed by a selected group of outstanding scientists in the field who had presented their work at the 2005 ISICR Annual Meeting. We are grateful to their efforts in writing these excellent articles in a relatively short amount of time. We would also like extend our special thanks to Professor Xin Yuan Liu, chairperson of the 2005 ISICR Annual Meeting, and Drs Sidney Pestka, John A Cidlowski, and Yufang Shi, who have acted as Editors for this special issue; and their efforts are instrumental to our successful assembly of an outstanding list of contributing authors. We are also grateful to Dr Christopher D Krause and several others for their time and efforts in reviewing the manuscripts.

Due to the large number of contributions we have received (total 22 articles), we eventually have to split them into two issues. Thus, 7 pieces (4 reviews and 3 research articles) have already been published in the January 2006 issue of *Cell Research*, while the current issue is exclusively dedicated to this topic and contains 15 articles (13 reviews and 2 research articles). Collectively, in these 22 articles, we hope to provide our readers with some of the most exciting and cutting edge advances in this fertile ground of biomedical research.