

# Year two

On the second anniversary of *Nature Metabolism*, we reflect on some of the developments at the journal against the backdrop of this extraordinary year.

The year 2020 will forever be marked as the one in which the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the COVID-19 pandemic upended our lives. Although this pandemic is far from over, we continue to adapt to protect the health and safety of our colleagues, communities and families. At the journal level, our editorial team went fully virtual, cancelling in-person conferences and visits, and learning to embrace new ways of interacting with the scientific community, some of which, such as virtual conferences and lab visits, are surely here to stay in some form. Our comprehensive focus issue on exercise metabolism and health was originally scheduled for publication in July to coincide with the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics. However, considering the substantial amount of work already invested by our authors and the quality of the articles, we decided to go ahead with publishing the focus issue in September (<https://www.nature.com/collections/hachbaijid>), despite the postponement of the Olympics. Because some of these articles are among our most popular content from last year, we feel that this was this right decision.

In the face of human tragedy, we were struck by the ingenuity and innovation displayed by the scientific community in working together towards a common goal. Observing the scientific progress in real time through our lens as editors was remarkable. One of the early and striking observations in relation to COVID-19 was the elevated risk of severe disease in people with diabetes or obesity. However, the molecular mechanisms that connect metabolic processes directly to SARS-CoV-2 infection or to pathological processes underlying COVID-19 are still largely unknown. A recent report in our pages connecting lipoprotein metabolism to SARS-CoV-2 cellular entry might provide the first mechanistic clues (C. Wei et al., *Nat. Metab.* 2, 1391–1400; 2020), but more research is needed to answer this important question. Another largely unresolved question is whether metabolic dysregulation

has a role in 'long COVID'. As we watch this space closely, we await studies from the scientific community that will help fill this critical knowledge gap over the course of this year.

In addition, 2020 has been an incredible second year of publishing for *Nature Metabolism*. An extended global lockdown earlier in the year was not wasted by the scientific community, and we, like many other journals, saw a substantial increase in submissions during the first pandemic wave in Europe and North America. In this second year, we have continued to grow our research content, publishing a total of 89 research articles, compared with 77 articles in 2019. We are nothing but grateful to all authors who entrusted us with their work and, of course, to our referees, who dedicated their precious time under the extraordinary circumstances of this past year. We continue to stand by our mission of highlighting exciting and inspiring research from across the full spectrum of metabolism research, no matter where it is carried out—in cells, model organisms, humans or even hibernating squirrels (yes, really: S. A. Rice et al., *Nat. Metab.* 2, 1459–1471; 2020). We hope that our readers see this guiding principle reflected in our virtual pages.

One of our most popular articles in 2020 was a Comment about misconceptions related to the Warburg effect (R. J. DeBerardinis and N. S. Chandel, *Nat. Metab.* 2, 127–129; 2020). This Comment serves as a prime example of how thoughtful commentary, and the forum that *Nature Metabolism* provides for it, can positively affect conversations amongst the wider metabolism community. As we aim to increase the number of Comments this year, please do reach out to us with ideas.

In 2020, we also went through several changes in editorial staff. We said goodbye to editors Elena Bellafante and Pooja Jha, and are grateful for their contributions to the journal. We also welcomed Isabella Samuelson to the *Nature Metabolism* team.

The New Year also marks a notable change to *Nature Metabolism* and the Nature research journals: the introduction of an Open Access publishing option. As of this month, authors will be able to choose to publish their work either via the traditional (subscription) publishing route or as Open Access, making the final published version of their article freely available instead of placed behind a subscription paywall. Payment for publication is made by the authors' institutions or funding bodies, who pay an article processing charge when the article is accepted (<https://www.nature.com/natmetab/for-authors/publishing-options>). In keeping with the principles for 'transformative journals' outlined by cOAlition S, we look forward to increasing the number of Open Access articles in *Nature Metabolism* over time, with the goal of becoming a fully Open Access journal in due course.

Looking ahead to 2021, with the global rollout of vaccines, we hope that we will be able to see some of you again in person this year. Because we expect these vaccines to have major effects on public health worldwide, it seems fitting that this year we will also celebrate the anniversary of another transformative twentieth-century achievement in public health: the centenary of the discovery of insulin, which not only offered a 'cure' to a previously devastating and deadly disease, but also paved the way for unravelling many of the foundational principles of metabolic regulation. Undoubtedly, our community will reflect on this anniversary throughout the year.

Although we cannot anticipate what tests and challenges we will face in 2021, as scientists, we are used to embracing the unknown and unexpected. Regardless of whatever 2021 has in store, we look forward to continuing this journey with you. □

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