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Abdeslem El Idrissi • William J. L'Amoreaux
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Taurine 8

Volume 1: The Nervous System, Immune
System, Diabetes and the Cardiovascular
System

 Springer

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Preface

The organizing committee wishes to thank all attendees of the 18th International Taurine Meeting that took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, from April 7th to 13th. This year, the conference highlighted the “*Mystique of Taurine.*” Taurine investigators have had the privilege of attending these scientific meetings on three continents: Asia, Europe, and North America. This marked the first time that our conference was held in Africa. As a result, we present here the data from investigators from five of the six continents (sadly taurine research has yet to hit Antarctica). With this geographical expansion, the interest in taurine research has exponentially grown. This international meeting was attended by approximately 120 scientists. We present here information on the roles of taurine in a variety of organ systems, from the brain to the reproductive system and every system in between. As you are keenly aware, there is certainly a mystique to taurine. Is it beneficial or harmful? Does it protect cells or induce cell death? Can it be used in conjunction with another molecule to benefit health or cause death? The answer (or at least a hint to the answer) to these and other questions lies within this body of works. Of course, not all questions were answered but there were many discussions that generated numerous new ideas that will be taken home and tested in the laboratory.

This meeting was also unique in that many undergraduate and graduate students from the College of Staten Island/CUNY attended and presented their research as part of a study abroad program. This opportunity represented the first time that most of these students attended an international conference. More importantly, it served to stimulate interest in taurine research and recruit future taurine researchers. We are greatly appreciative for the overwhelming support of the College of Staten Island’s administration, particularly Dr. Deborah Vess, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Programs; Dr. William Fritz, the provost; Renee Cassidy, study abroad advisory from The Center for International Service; Debra Evans-Greene, Director of the Office of Access and Success Programs; and Dr. Claude Braithwaite of the City College of New York and the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation.

The abstracts of the conference were published in the journal “Amino Acids” (Vol. 42, Issue 4). We thank Drs. Lubec and Panuschka for making this possible.

Because of the success of this meeting, the organizing committee wishes to gratefully acknowledge the following:

- Taisho Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., Tokyo Japan for their generous financial support.
- Professor Dr. Gert Lubec, FRSC (UK), Medical University of Vienna and Editor in Chief of AMINO ACIDS.
- Dr. Claudia Panuschka, Springer Wien, New York, Senior Editor Biomedicine/ Life Sciences.
- Dr. Portia E. Formento, Editor, Biomedicine, Springer US.
- Dr. Melanie Tucker (Wilichinsky) Editor, Genetics and Systems Biology, Springer US.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I thank all the attendees of the 18th international Taurine Meeting and the sponsors that made this meeting possible.

Staten Island, NY, USA

Abdeslem El Idrissi

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Part II
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Function of Taurine in the
Cardiovascular System

Chapter 1

Neuropsychopharmacological Actions of Taurine

Shailesh P. Banerjee, Andre Ragnauth, Christopher Y. Chan, Mervan S. Agovic, Vincent Sostris, Iman Jashanmal, Louis Vidal, and Eitan Friedman

Abstract Taurine, an endogenous amino sulfonic acid, exhibits numerous neuropsychopharmacological activities. Previous studies in our laboratory have shown that it is an effective anti-cataleptic and neuro-protective agent. Current investigations show that acute or chronic administration of psychotropic drug cocaine may increase extracellular release of endogenous taurine which may protect

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