

## Purinergic signalling in visceral organs in health and disease: Preface

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The objective of this Special Issue is to give a historical account of the development of our understanding of the roles of purinergic signalling in the complex physiological and pathophysiological activity of visceral organs. The reviews include: Gastrointestinal tract and related organs; Liver; Endocrine organs; Reproductive system; Kidney; and Urinary tract. Thousands of papers have been published on these topics since the seminal paper of Drury and Szent-Györgyi in 1929, which reported extracellular actions of purines in the heart and blood vessels. It was inevitable, therefore, that I needed to be selective by limiting coverage to the most original findings. I apologise if I have neglected to refer to papers in the massive literature that others feel should have been

included. Historical Reviews about purinergic signalling in the airways and pancreas are not included because they were published recently elsewhere (Burnstock et al. (2012) Purinergic signalling in the airways. *Pharmacol Rev*, **64**, 834–868; Burnstock and Novak (2012) Purinergic signalling in the pancreas in health and disease. *J Endocrinol*, **213**, 123–141). The purinergic signalling field is expanding rapidly and it is getting increasingly demanding to keep up with the literature, so I hope that these reviews will provide useful background information for scientists starting work in this field. This Special Issue could not have been completed without the outstanding help of my Editorial Assistant, Dr Gill Knight.

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