

# *Review of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetics*

ΕΠΙΘΕΟΡΗΣΗ ΚΛΙΝΙΚΗΣ ΦΑΡΜΑΚΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΑΡΜΑΚΟΚΙΝΗΤΙΚΗΣ  
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## VOLUME 22, 2008 ❁ No 2

## CONTENTS

## INVITED SPEAKERS

M. GÖTHERT.....	83
<i>Changes in pharmacological and functional properties of human 5-HT receptors by genetic, splice and subunit variation</i>	
P. HONKAKOSKI....	85
<i>The role of nuclear receptor in regulation of CYPs</i>	
C. SAMPAIO.....	86
<i>Neuroprotection: The difficult journey from the bench to the bedside</i>	
P. ATHANASIOU.....	87
<i>Biological factors: New perspectives in the treatment of autoimmune diseases</i>	
CH. FLORDELLIS, P. PAPATHANASSOPOULOS.....	88
<i>Multi-drug targeting as a new basis in Pharmacology</i>	
E. KASTRITIS.....	89
<i>Modern therapy of multiple myeloma</i>	
M. KOUTSILIERIS.....	90
<i>Pathophysiology of osteoplastic metastasis in prostate cancer: Therapeutic implications</i>	
Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI.....	91
<i>Sex differences in drug response</i>	
D. DUKA.....	92
<i>Neurobiological mechanisms underlying drug addiction: Is there a common pathway?</i>	
A. GRAVANIS.....	93
<i>Regenerative Pharmacology</i>	
I. CHINOU.....	94
<i>Introduction to herbals</i>	
P. GALANOPOULOU-COUVARI.....	95
<i>Herbal and dietary supplement – drug interactions: Evidence for clinical significance</i>	
W. KNÖSS.....	97
<i>Herbal medicinal products in Europe</i>	
B. MATHIOUDAKIS.....	98
<i>The legal situation regarding the use of vitamins, minerals and certain other ingredients in foods</i>	
T.C. THEOHARIDES.....	99
<i>Medical foods and dietary supplements: Minimal requirements for safe clinical use</i>	
DRAGO F.....	101
<i>Docendo Discimus: Teaching Pharmacology in the Modern Europe</i>	
T. GRIESBACHER.....	102

*Medical curricula between sharpening Universities' individual profiles and the need for speed: Effects on Pharmacology teaching in Austria*

S. MAXWELL.....103  
*How can we best prepare medical students to be safe and effective prescribers?*

J.S. PAPADOPOULOS.....104  
*Knowledge or attitude?*

T.C. THEOHARIDES.....105  
*Pharmacology: From basic principles to translational medicine to clinical practice*

## ORAL AND POSTERS PRESENTATIONS

I. ANDREADOU, S. PARASCHOS, E.K. ILIODROMITIS, A. ZOGA, P. MAGIATIS, S. MITAKOU, L. KAKLAMANIS, A.L. SKALTSOUNIS, D.TH. KREMASTINOS.....107  
*Antiatheromatic and hypolipidemic activity of Chios mastic gum in anesthetized rabbits*

O. ASIMAKI, N. SAKELLARIDIS, D. MANGOURA.....109  
*CB1R-dependent activation of Fyn tyrosine kinase and protein kinase C delta, PKC $\delta$ , in lipid rafts*

E. BEGAS, E. KOUVARAS, V. TSIOKOU, E.K. ASPRODINI.....113  
*In vivo evaluation of CYP1A2 and CYP2A6 activities in a Greek population during menopause*

A. BIBIS, G. DIMOGERONTAS, K. KOUZELIS, A. ZARROS, C. LIAPI.....115  
*Lazaroids: A new category of neuroprotective agents*

A. BOULTADAKIS, G. GEORGIADOU, P.A. TARANTILIS, N. PITSIKAS.....118  
*Effects of the active constituents of Crocus Sativus L., crocins, in an animal model of anxiety*

I. CHARALAMPOPOULOS, V. MINAS, N. AVLONITIS, T. CALOGEROPOULOU, A. GRAVANIS.....119  
*Synthetic spiro-neurosteroid analogs exerting structure-specific neuroprotective effects*

E. CHATZAKI, C. PASXOS, M. LAMBROPOULOU, S. ANAGNOSTOULIS, CH. CHARSOU, E. CHOURIDOU, E. MICHAILIDOU, F. PAPACHRISTOU, TH.C. CONSTANTINIDIS, C. SIMOPOULOS.....122  
*Corticotropin releasing factor (CRF) and liver apoptosis*



- O. CHOULIARA, A. POLISSIDIS, M. DOSI, A. GALANOPOULOS, E.TZAVARA, M. MARSELOS, Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI, C. SPYRAKI, K. ANTONIOU.....124  
*Behavioral effects and dopaminergic indices following THC administration in two rat phenotypes*
- TH.C. CONSTANTINIDIS, E. VAGKA, P. DALLIDOU, P. BASTA, V. DRAKOPOULOS, E. CHATZAKI.....126  
*Occupational exposure of health care workers to chemotherapeutic agents: A Study in Greek Hospitals*
- E.P. DASKALOPOULOS, G. RENTESI, M.A LANG, M. MARSELOS, M. KONSTANDI.....129  
*Hepatic drug metabolizing efficacy modifications after exposure to stress*
- E. DIMITRIADI., M. NIKOLAIDOU, P. PAPPAS, M. MARSELOS.....131  
*Sex differences in Pharmacokinetics of Doxorubicin*
- CH. DOKOS, K. KALOUSIS, A. KOUYOUMTZIS, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....133  
*Chemotherapy of osteosarcoma: Beyond conventional approaches to future concepts*
- D. ECONOMOU, E. PAPAKONSTANTINOU, I. KLAGAS, ATH. SAKADAMIS, A. SIOGA.....138  
*Hyaluronic acid induces wound closure by primary human skin fibroblasts in a wound healing model*
- H. FRANGOY, E. NIKOLOUSSIS, N. MASSOURIDOU, T. VAVILIS, E.-N. EMMANOUIL.....141  
*Caspase-3 activity in pregnant rat spleen and lymph nodes after treatment with Cycloheximide and the development of malignant breast tumor in experimental animals: Case report*
- A. GALANOPOULOS, A. POLISSIDIS, O. CHOULIARA, Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI, K. ANTONIOU.....145  
*Glutamatergic alterations following cannabinoid administration*
- C. GIAGINIS, A. ZIRA, S. THEOCHARIS, A. TSANTILI-KAKOULIDOU.....146  
*Simple physicochemical properties as effective filters for risk estimation of drug transport across the human placental barrier*
- M. GIANNAKOULI, A.J. ALETRAS, E. GIANNOPOULOU.....149  
*Antagonistic effect of TGF- $\beta$ 1 on the IL-1 $\beta$ -induced expression of MMP-1 in human fibroblasts of different tissue origin*
- E.-M. GEORGANTA, G. MAZARAKOU, A. AGALOU, Z. GEORGOUSI.....152  
*The C-termini of the  $\mu$ - and  $\delta$ - opioid receptors differentially bind to signal transducers and Activators of transcription, STAT5A and STAT5B*
- CH. HADJIMICHAEL, S. SAVVA, A. ANDREOU, S. THEOCHAROUS.....156  
*Physicians and the use of antibiotics in Cyprus*
- C. HADJICOSTA, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....159  
*Eph receptors and ephrin ligands: Back to the origin in the therapy of cancer*
- A. HATZISOTIRIOU, D. KAPOUKRANIDOU, M. ALBANI.....163  
*Assessment of motoneuron death during development following central and peripheral deaf-ferentation*
- Z. IAKOVIDOU-KRITSI, K. AKRITOPOULOU, M.T. EKONOMOPOULOU, T. LIALIARIS, D. MOURELATOS AND E. MIOGLOU-KALOUP-TSI.....166  
*Genotoxic and cytostatic effect of atypical antipsychotic drugs in normal human lymphocytes cultures*
- I. ILIAS, M. ALEXIOU, K. MICHALAKIS, G. MITIOS, E. VENAki, S. NIKOPOULOU.....169  
*Study of the effect of statin antilipidemic therapy on the thyroid*
- M. IORDANIDOU, A. TAVRIDOU, M.V. VASSELIADIS, K.I. ARVANITIDIS, J. PETRIDIS, D. CHRISTAKIDIS, V.G MANOLOPOULOS.....170  
*The role of polymorphisms in 5-HT<sub>2c</sub> receptor gene in type 2 diabetes mellitus and obesity in the caucasian population*
- K. KALOKASIDIS, D. MOLYVA, V. MIRTSOU, H. DEDI, B. KOKKAS, A. GOULAS.....174  
*The effect of rupatadine on histamine-induced oedema formation and TNF- $\alpha$  gene expression in the rat paw*
- C. KANI, K. PAPANIKOLAOU, A. PEHLIVANIDIS, Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI.....176  
*Cholinesterase inhibitors and memantine in vascular dementia: A systematic review of randomized controlled trials*
- D. KAPOUCRANIDOU, R. KOTAKIDOU, M. PONTIKA, D. HADJIPAVLOU-LITINA.....178  
*Effects from chronic iron administration on functional organs: Correlation with free Radicals*
- CH. KARACHALIOS.....181  
*Salmonella enterica Serovar Typhi Ty21a expressing HPV Type 16 L1 as a potential live vaccine against cervical cancer and typhoid fever*

- I. KARAMOUZIS, F. KESIDON, E. HASAPOPOULOU, C. MANOLOPOULOS, B. PAPAGEORGIOU, M. GIANNOULIS, E. SAMPANOPOULOU, D. MICHAILIDOU, TH. DARDAVESSIS, M. KARAMOUZIS, I. PIDONIA.....182  
*False positive tumour markers CA 15-3, CEA, CA 125 and CA 19-9 in patients with homozygous  $\beta$ -thalassaemia, sickle cell /  $\beta$ -thalassaemia and thalassaemia intermedia*
- G. KARKOULIAS, K. KYPREOS, P. PAPATHANASOPOULOS, CH. FLORELLIS.....185  
*Sustained activation of CREB is required for neuronal differentiation of  $\alpha_2$ -AR transfected PC12 cells*
- D.S. KATSIABAS, S.K. MAVRIDIS, I.S. PAPPAS.....189  
*Expression of cytochrome P450s and transcription factors Pxr and Car in canine tissues*
- K. KATSIKARIS, I. SKOPELITIS, A. PAPAIONANNOU, A. GOTSI, N. KARAGIANNIDIS.....193  
*A pharmacoeconomic comparison study of an lc/ms method used for the bioequivalence study of Donepezil compared with a similar HPLC method for the same substance*
- K. KOSMA, A. SIANNI, K. LIATSOS, C. LEOTSAKOU, A. KALOGEROPOULOU, V. ROUMPOS.....195  
*Effects of long-term antipsychotic treatment of oxidative defense system parameters*
- A. KOTSIU, E. CHATZIGIANNI, A. PITSICALI, C. TESSEROMATIS.....198  
*Cholesteryl ester transfer protein (CETP) changes under the influence of saturated fat diet and anabolic treatment in rats*
- M. KOUTSIOUMPA, M. HATZIAPOSTOULOU, C. MIKELIS, E. PAPADIMITRIOU.....201  
*The stimulatory effects of aprotinin on human endothelial and prostate cancer cells are mediated by pleiotrophin*
- M. KOUTSOVITI-PAPADOPOULOU, TH.A. PSARRA, G.C. BATZIAS.....203  
*Lower esophageal sphincter relaxing agents: An in vitro comparative study in the rabbit*
- M. KOUTSOVITI-PAPADOPOULOU, L. XU, I. DEPOORTERE, L. THIELEMANS, TH. THIJS, TH.L. PEETERS.....207  
*In vitro responses of the guinea pig gastrointestinal tract to homologous motilin*
- E. KOUVARAS, T. KILINDRIS, A. VASILAKI, E.K. ASPRODINI.....212  
*Acute in vivo exposure to fentanyl reduces GABA immunoreactivity in the CA1 area of the rat hippocampus*
- L.J. LEONTIADIS, M.-P. PAPAKONSTANTINOY, M. SARRIS, Z. GEORGOUSI.....214  
*RGS4 and RGS2 differentially modulate opioid receptor signaling*
- CH.I. LIAKOU, A. KAMAT, D. NG TANG, H. CHEN, J. SUN, CH. LOGOTHETIS, P. SHARMA.....217  
*Anti-CTLA-4 therapy in bladder cancer patients alters immune responses by increasing IFN $\gamma$  production and decreasing the CD4<sup>+</sup>FOXP3<sup>+</sup> regulatory T cells in the tumor microenvironment*
- CH. LIAPI, A. ZARROS, S. THEOCHARIS, H. AL-HUMADI, F. ANIFANTAKI, E. GKROUZMAN, Z. MELLIOS, N. SKANDALI, S. TSAKIRIS.....221  
*Lanthanum effects on the adult rat brain antioxidant status and adenosinetriphosphatase activities: Modulation by L-cysteine*
- A. LYMPEROPOULOS, W.J. KOCH.....224  
*Adrenal beta-arrestin 1 promotes physiological aldosterone production*
- CH. MAGLARAS, M. PARAVA, P. PAPADOPOULOS, D.TSIPTSIOS, P. BEREDIMAS.....227  
*Pharmaceutical approach in mild cognitive impairment. Is it advisable? Recent data and prospects*
- I. MAIMARI, CH. DOKOS, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....230  
*Brain wave patterns and steroids administration*
- F.M. MALAMAS, C.G. THOMAS, T. STEFOS, A. TSATSOULIS, A.M. EVANGELOU.....232  
*The antagonizing effects of N-acetyl-cysteine on prolactin induced proliferation of human breast cancer cells*
- G. MANTA, S. TARAVIRAS, E. KOUVELAS, A. MITSACOS.....235  
*Developmental heterogeneity in splicing of the postnatal rat retinal N-methyl-D-aspartate glutamate receptor 1*
- A. MATRALIS, A. KOUROUNAKIS.....238  
*Hypolipidaemic and antioxidant properties of novel squalene synthase inhibitors*
- M.C. MAVROGIORGOU, P. STAVRINOY, P. PAPPAS, G. MILIARAS, K. POLYZOIDIS, M. MARSELOS.....241  
*Expression of drug-metabolizing proteins in human brain tumors: Preliminary results*
- M. MAVRIKAKI, G.G. NOMIKOS, G. PANAGIS.....242

- Evaluation of the effects of different mood stabilizers in a rat model of euphoria*  
 TH. MAVRAKANAS, E. TSIRELLA, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....243  
*Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists and dipeptidyl peptidase-4 inhibitors in the treatment of type 2 diabetes*  
 M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI, CH. DOKOS, M. ANDRONOGLU, P. PAPADIMOULI, K. KALOUSIS.....246  
*Administration of antiplatelet agents in cardiovascular disorders: Results from a clinical study*  
 M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI, CH. DOKOS, K. KALOUSIS.....250  
*Serum butyrylcholinesterase activity as a marker of aging process in drug metabolism: Study in Greek aging population*  
 M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI, CH. DOKOS.....254  
*Statins and bone formation: Proposed methods of implementing statins innovation in osteoporosis*  
 M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI, A. ANOGEIANAKI, CH. DOKOS, D. KOUTSONIKOLAS, J. LIAGOURIS, G. ANOGIANAKIS.....256  
*The effect of orlistat on blood glucose and body weight in an onset diabetic rat model*  
 K. NAZOS, M.-T. BASSI, N. BRESOLIN, K. PANTOS.....259  
*The first identified mutation associated to alternating hemiplegia of childhood (AHC) in a Greek Family: Clinical and genetical approach*  
 M. NIKOLAIDOU, P. PAPPAS, K. ANTONIOU, M. MARSELOS.....263  
*Effects of a selective cyclooxygenase inhibitor on behavioural and neurochemical parameters*  
 Z. PANAGI, P. BOUNTOURIS, E. PAPADIMITRIOU, M. SKOUROLIAKOU, F. KALFARENTZOS.....264  
*Preliminary evaluation of preoperative and short-term (1 year) postoperative serum fat-soluble vitamin levels in super-obese patients undergoing A rouxen-Y gastric bypass with biliopancreatic diversion (RYGBP/BPD) malabsortive operation*  
 M. PANTELIDOU, K. DIMAS, A. GEORGOPOULOS, S. HATZIANTONIOU, C. DEMETZOS...265  
*Preparation, characterization and in vitro evaluation of liposome-incorporated curcumin on colorectal cancer cell lines*  
 G.K. PAPADIMAS, K.N. TZIROGIANNIS, M.D. DEMONAKOU, S.D. SKALTSAS, A.D. GRYPIOTI, K.T. KOURENTZI, K.N. ALEXANDROPOULOU, K. SOURLIS, M.G. MYKONIATIS, G.I. PANOUTSOPOULOS.....267  
*Hepatic regeneration after 60-70% and 30-34% partial hepatectomy in the rat*  
 P.K. PANAGOPOULOS, S. TSARTSALIS, CH. DOKOS, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....269  
*New kids on the block: Statins in the fight against Alzheimer's Disease*  
 P. PAPAIOANNIDOU, A. KAMBAROUDIS, V. VLAHOVIC-PALCEVSKI, A. SABO, L. PEJAKOV, B. BEOVIC, R. VELICKOVIC-RADOVANOVIC, E. KARAMANLIS, A. RASKOVIC, C. PAPANIKOLAOU, M. JAKOVLJEVIC, H. CARAGEORGIOU, I. DIAMANTIS, G.M. BENONI, L. CUZZOLIN, J. PETROVIC, S. JANKOVIC, G. HATZITHEOHARIS, G. VELO, N. HARLAFTIS, TH. GERASIMIDIS.....273  
*Quality of perioperative chemoprophylaxis in General Surgery: Preliminary results of ASPPOC in South Europe*  
 P. PAPAIOANNIDOU, K. NANASSIS, A. SABO, V. VLAHOVIC-PALCEVSKI, L. PEJAKOV, O. HORVAT, M. JAKOVLJEVIC, P. SELVIARIDIS, G.-M. BENONI, L. CUZZOLIN, Z. TOMIC, S. JANKOVIC, G. VELO.....276  
*Quality of perioperative chemoprophylaxis in Neurosurgery: Preliminary results of ASPPOC in South Europe*  
 P. PAPAIOANNIDOU, P. AKRITOPOULOS, G.-M. BENONI, L. CUZZOLIN, G. VELO.....279  
*Quality of perioperative chemoprophylaxis in Orthopedics Surgery: Preliminary results of ASPPOC in Greece and Italy*  
 P. PAPAIOANNIDOU, D. VAVILIS, G.-M. BENONI, L. CUZZOLIN, G. VELO, B. TARLATZIS, J. BONTIS.....282  
*Quality of perioperative chemoprophylaxis in Obstetrics and Gynecology: Preliminary results of ASPPOC in Greece and Italy*  
 P. PAPAIOANNIDOU.....285  
*Theoretical and practical issues of cognitive development in problem based learning*  
 M. PARAVA, CH. MAGLARAS, D. TSIPTSIOS, M. DOULGERAKIS, P. BEREDIMAS.....288  
*Succinylcholine in rapid sequence induction (RSI): How safe is its use when there is evidence of intracranial changes?*  
 S.M. PIPERAKIS, K. KONTOGIANNI, G. KARANASTASI, C. SIFFEL, A. CEBULSKA-WASILEWSKA, R. MARKOS, Z. IAKOVIDOU-KRITSI, M.M. PIPERAKIS.....291  
*Effects of pesticides on exposed populations from four European Countries*

- N. PITSIKAS, S. ZISOPOULOU, I. PAPPAS, N. SAKELLARIDIS.....294  
*The selective 5-HT<sub>6</sub> receptor antagonist Ro 04-6790 attenuates psychotomimetic effects of the NMDA receptor antagonist MK-801*
- P.M. PITYCHOUTIS, K. NAKAMURA, P.A. TSONIS, Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI.....295  
*Neurochemical alterations following acute immune stimulation: A male versus female study*
- S. PLAKAS, I. SPANOS, G. DIMOGERONTAS, E. ROKAS, M. PAPADOPOULOS, A. ROVLIAS, E. KONSTANDINIDIS.....296  
*Gliadel wafers in the treatment of malignant glioma: Our experience*
- E. POLAKIS, M. LAMBROPOULOU, C. CHAR-SOU, C. CHEIMONIDOU, K. CHALKIADAKI, E. CHATZAKI.....297  
*The expression of the corticotropin releasing factor (CRF) system of neuropeptides and receptors in mouse microglia cells*
- A. POLISSIDIS, O. CHOULIARA, A. GALANOPOULOS, E. TZAVARA, M. MARSELOS, Z. PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI, K. ANTONIOU.....300  
*Dopaminergic modifications following win 55,212-2 administration in the conditioned place preference paradigm*
- CH. POURZITAKI, TH. TZELLOS, CH. SARDELI, G. PAPAZISIS, E. AMANITI, D. KOUVELAS..302  
*Evidence-based evaluation of emergency care treatment algorithms: 15 dominant myths*
- C. POURZITAKI, G. KANELLOS, I. KLAGAS, A. KRITIS.....304  
*Combined treatment of aspartyl protease inhibitor and NMDA antagonist in Pc12 cells after glutamate excitotoxicity*
- C. POURZITAKI, H. LOGOTHETI, C. SARDELI, G. PAPAZISIS, P. ARAMPATZIS, D. KOUVELAS.....308  
*Pregabalin combined with epidural analgesia in chronic cancer pain patients*
- TH.A. PSARRA, TH. THIJS, A. DIEZ-FRAILE, I. DEPOORTERE, G.C. BATZIAS, TH.L. PEETERS, M. KOUTSOVITI-PAPADOPOULOU.....310  
*Pharmacologic characteristics of the rabbit lower esophageal sphincter*
- G. RAGIA, A. TAVRIDOU, K. ARVANITIDIS, E. NIKOLAIDIS, G. BOUGIOUKAS, V.G. MANOLOPOULOS.....315  
*Frequencies of eNOS gene polymorphisms - 786T>C and 894G>T in the Greek Population*
- G. RENTESI, K. ANTONIOU, M. MARSELOS, M. SYRROU, M. KONSTANDI.....318  
*Long-term consequences of early maternal deprivation in behavioral and neurobiological responses of adult rat*
- A. RUCINSKA, K. GARDIKIS, M. IONOV, M. JOKIEL, T. FELEKIS, B.R. STEELE, C.G. SCRETTAS, C. DEMETZOS, M. MICHA-SCRETTAS, M. BRYSEWSKA, T. GABRYELAK.....319  
*Cell toxicity and fluorescence spectroscopy studies of carboxyl, amine and hydroxyl terminated dendrimers*
- CH. SARDELI, TH. TZELLOS, E. AMANITI, G. PAPAZISIS, K. KARAKOULAS, CH. POURZITAKI, D. KOUVELAS.....320  
*Deciding on the best treatment strategy for recurrent febrile seizures: An evidence-based Medicine approach*
- P. SEMERTZIDIS, S. DOUMA, K. PETIDIS, A. TRIANTAFYLLOU, E. GALIAGOUSI, P. PAPAETHIMIOU, N. PAPADOPOULOS, N. KARTALI, A. PYRPASOPOULOU, M. DOUMAS, C. ZAMBOULIS.....322  
*Efficacy of amlodipine in older hypertensive patients (>55 years) not controlled with inhibitors of the renin-angiotensin system or beta blockers*
- A. SIANNI, A. GANOTOPOULOU, K. KOSMA, K. LIATSOS, N. KARAGIANNI, E. LASKOS, D. VASILOPOULOS.....323  
*Effects of statins on key biochemical indexes of patients with acute ischemic cerebrovascular stroke*
- F. SIGALA, A. PAPALAMBROS, K. FILIS, S. MARKANTONIS, M. DEMOPOULOU, P. SIGALAS, A. KOTSINAS, A. NIFOROU, B. GORGOULIS, I. ANDREADOU.....326  
*The role of oxidative and nitrosative stress mechanisms in symptomatic carotid disease*
- V. SOURLAS, V. ATHANASIOU, A. VASILAKI.....327  
*Effect of somatostatinergic analogues on the ischemia-induced release of [<sup>3</sup>H]-D-aspartate and [<sup>3</sup>H]-GABA from rat retina and hippocampus*
- H. SOUKI, G. VRIONI, M. KATRAMADOU, D.G. HELA, H. CARAGEORGIOU.....329  
*Serum pseudocholinesterase levels after chronic exposure to fenthion and correlation with morbidity (cancer, liver diseases, respiratory and neurological diseases)*
- C. SPANOU, N. ALIGIANNIS, A. L. SKALTSOUNIS, D. KOURETAS.....336  
*Effect of leguminosae family plant extracts and polyphenolic fractions on topoisomerase I-induced nicking of DNA*

- TH. STROUBINI, A. PERELAS, CH. LIAPI, D. PERREA, I. DONTAS, M. TRAPALI, P. GALANOPOULOU.....339  
*Effects of sibutramine treatment on food intake, serum lipoproteins and TNF- $\alpha$  levels in rats fed standard laboratory or three isocaloric diets*
- A. TRIANTAFYLLOU, S. DOUMA, K. PETIDIS, P. SEMERTZIDIS, E. GALIAGOUSI, P. PAEFTHIMIOU, N. PAPADOPOULOS, N. KARTALI, A. PYRPASOPOULOU, M. DOUMAS, C. ZAMBOULIS.....343  
*The implementation of British Hypertension Society Guidelines results in improved blood pressure control in young hypertensives*
- B. TSAKMAKI, G. PAPADOPOULOS.....344  
*The introduction of the use of stimulants for attention deficit and hyperactivity in children (and adolescents)*
- ATH. TSIOKANOS, ATH. JAMURTAS, P. SCHAMASCH, P. PAPALEXIS, CHR. TSITSIMPIKOU.....347  
*Statistical data collected during urine collection for doping control at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games and recommendations to improve the urine collection process*
- E. TSIRELLA, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....350  
*Nitrous oxide for conscious sedation in Pediatric Dentistry*
- E. TSIRELLA, M. MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI.....353  
*Side effects of agents used in local anaesthesia*
- TH. TZELLOS, G. PAPAZISIS, E. AMANITI, CH. SARDELI, CH.POURZITAKI, D. TAHMATZIDIS, D. KOUVELAS.....355  
*Pregabalin as a new treatment strategy for neuropathic pain in spinal cord injury: An evidence based evaluation*
- TH. TZELLOS, I. KLAGAS, E. PAPAKON-STANTINO, K. VAHTSEVANOS, S. TRIARIDIS, ATH. KYRGIDIS, ATH. PRINTZA, E. ZVINTZOU, G. KARAKIULAKIS.....358  
*Differential expression of matrix metalloproteinases 2 and 9 in basal cell carcinoma, photo-exposed and photo-protected skin*
- A.S. VESKOUKIS, M.G. NIKOLAIDIS, A. KYPAROS, D. KOKKINOS, E. VARAMENTI, D. KOURETAS.....360  
*The Effect of allopurinol on protein carbonyls and swimming performance in rats*
- E. YIANNAKOPOULOU.....363  
*Cephalosporin induced haemolytic anaemia in surgical patients: Systematic review*
- C. GIAGINIS, A. ZIRA, S. THEOCHARIS, A.TSANTILI-KAKOULIDOU.....368  
*Property distribution in the chemical space of PPAR- $\gamma$  agonists: Evaluation of drug-like characteristics*
- A.I. LIAKOU, K. ARABATZI, C.I. LIAKOU, M.J. THEODORAKIS.....366  
*Impact of obesity on cytokine secretion patterns following an oral glucose tolerance test in individuals with normal glucose tolerance*

## Letter from Guest Editor

The progress and contributions of 20<sup>th</sup> century pharmacology has been immense with over 20 pharmacologists to have received Nobel Prizes. This field of medical studies covers many areas; it is built upon and at the same time incorporates many disciplines such as biochemistry, biology physiology, pathology, anatomy, molecular biology, while the development of new analytical and experimental techniques and instruments has given a new boost in pharmacological research. Yet, although a remarkable progress has been made in developing new drugs and in understanding how they act, the challenges are endless. Integrating a depth of knowledge in many related scientific disciplines, pharmacologists offer a unique perspective to solving drug and chemical related problems which impinge on human health, with ultimate goal the treatment and prevention of major diseases.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Panhellenic Congress of Pharmacology focuses on four *hot* subjects: Regenerative Pharmacology, Herbal Medicines, Pharmacology of Abuse and Dependence, and Education in Pharmacology.

- *Regenerative Pharmacology* is one of the newest areas in Pharmacology, represents a groundbreaking field of research and has the potential to radically alter the treatment of diseases and disorders.

- *Herbal Medicines* have acquired an important percentage among the drug used; according to WHO 80% of people worldwide rely on herbal medicines for some aspect of their primary health care. This continuously increasing use of plant medicines imposes the need for establishing new regulations.

- *Pharmacology of Abuse and Dependence*, still not a well defined area, presents a lot of challenge for researchers and clinicians.

- *Education in Pharmacology* remains a hot subject in the Medical education, following the knowledge *explosion* of the last decades accompanied by a decreasing reliance on didactic teaching. The crucial question is: how and what should we teach?

We hope that the round table discussions along with the invited lectures, included in this abstract book, will raise new and intriguing ques-

tions that will further stimulate research, and will contribute to new therapeutic approaches and attitudes.

I would like to thank the Editorial Board of *Review of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetics* in particular Journal Editors Prof. S.T. Plessas and Dr C.T. Plessas for invitation and for providing the suitable and high-standard forum through which new research findings will become available to the scientific community.

*The Guest Editor*

*Charis Liapi*

Assist. Professor in Pharmacology  
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Chair of Hellenic Society of Pharmacology

## Evaluation of the Effects of Different Mood Stabilizers in a Rat Model of Euphoria

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**Key words:** Mood stabilizers, rat model, euphoria

### INTRODUCTION

Psychostimulants, including amphetamine, induce manic symptoms in humans and exacerbate mania in individuals with bipolar disorder. In general, these effects are antagonized by mood stabilizers, like lithium and valproate. Psychostimulants have been reported to facilitate intracranial self-stimulation (ICSS) behavior in rats, which might be well related to the increases in elation and hedonistic drive of bipolar patients. However, the interaction between amphetamine and mood stabilizers in the ICSS model has not been investigated. The present study was designed to compare the effects of acute systemic administration of lithium chloride (LiCl), valproic acid (VPA) and lamotrigine (LTG) on ICSS behavior in rats. Furthermore we studied the effects of LiCl, VPA and LTG on amphetamine-induced potentiation of brain stimulation reward.

### METHODS

Male Sprague-Dawley rats (300-370g) were stereotaxically implanted with a monopolar stimulating electrode aimed at the lateral hypothalamus (LH). The animals were trained to self-stimulate using constant stimulation parameters which maintained near maximal bar-pressing rates. Once the operant response was learned the animals were then trained to self-stimulate during trials in which the stimulation current intensity was held constant and the pulse frequency was systematically reduced from values that supported maximal responding to those that induced extinction. Each pulse frequency was tested during a single 60s trial that was preceded by the noncontingent delivery of three trains of priming stimulation. Between the different trials there was an extinction period of 30s. Drug treatment began when the function relating bar-pressing rate to pulse frequency (the rate-frequency function) was

stable for at least three consecutive days. Each drug or vehicle self-stimulation test consisted of a pre- and post-injection rate-frequency function determination. In the first study (acute administration of mood stabilizers), the animals were injected with different doses of LiCl or VPA or LTG while in the second study (acute administration of mood stabilizers + amphetamine) the animals were pre-treated with LiCl or VPA or LTG followed by amphetamine. The significance of the drugs effect was statistically evaluated using one-way (LiCl, VPA or LTG) and two-way (LiCl and AMP, VPA and AMP or LTG and AMP) analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by the Bonferroni test for multiple comparisons. The analysis was performed on two aspects of data obtained from the rate-frequency curve, i.e. the ICSS threshold and the maximum rate of responding or asymptote.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Acute administration of either LiCl or VPA in the highest doses increased ICSS thresholds. On the contrary LTG failed to alter reward at any of the doses tested. Furthermore, in the second study, only LiCl, and not VPA or LTG, attenuated amphetamine-induced potentiation of brain stimulation reward.

The present results might explain the different effects of those common mood stabilizers observed in patients with bipolar disorder, i.e. the fact that lithium is more effective than valproic acid in reducing manic relapses, whereas valproic acid and lamotrigine are more effective during the depressive phases of the disorder. The present results suggest that the ICSS model combined with amphetamine administration will be useful to explore in rats the elation and increased hedonistic drive observed in bipolar patients and ultimately help to identify novel drug treatments for bipolar disorder.



VOLUME 22, 2008 ☼ No 2  
CONTENTS

- AGALOU A. 152  
 AKRITOPOULOS P. 279  
 AKRITOPOULOU K. 166  
 ALBANI M. 163  
 ALETRAS A.J. 149  
 ALEXANDROPOULOU K.N. 267  
 ALEXIOU M. 169  
 AL-HUMADI H. 221  
 ALIGIANNIS N. 336  
 AMANITI E. 302,320,355  
 ANAGNOSTOULIS S. 122  
 ANDREADOU I. 107,326  
 ANDREOU A. 156  
 ANDRONOGLOU M. 246  
 ANIFANTAKI F. 221  
 ANOGEIANAKI A. 256  
 ANOGIANAKIS G. 256  
 ANTONIOU K. 124,145,263, 300,318  
 ARABATZI K. 369  
 ARAMPATZIS P. 308  
 ARVANITIDIS K.I. 170,315  
 ASIMAKI O. 109  
 ASPRODINI E.K. 113,212  
 ATHANASIOU P. 87  
 ATHANASIOU V. 327  
 AVLONITIS N. 119  
 BASSI M.-T. 259  
 BASTA P. 126  
 BATZIAS G.C. 203,310  
 BEGAS E. 113  
 BENONI G.M. 273,276,279,282  
 BEOVIC B. 273  
 BEREDIMAS P. 227,288  
 BIBIS A. 115  
 BONTIS J. 282  
 BOUGIOUKAS G. 315  
 BOULTADAKIS A. 118  
 BOUNTOURIS P. 264  
 BRESOLIN N. 259  
 BRYSEWSKA M. 319  
 CALOGEROPOULOU T. 119  
 CARAGEORGIU H. 273,329  
 CEBULSKA-WASILEWSKA A. 291  
 CHALKIADAKI K. 297  
 CHARALAMPOPOULOS I. 119  
 CHARSOU C. 122,297  
 CHOURIDOU E. 122  
 CHATZAKI E. 122,126,297  
 CHATZIGIANNI E. 198  
 CHEIMONIDOU C. 297  
 CHEN H. 217  
 CHINOI I. 94  
 CHOULIARA O. 124,145,300  
 CHRISTAKIDIS D. 170  
 CONSTANTINIDIS TH.C. 122, 126  
 CUZZOLIN L. 273,276,279,282  
 DALLIDOU P. 126  
 DARDAVESSIS TH. 182  
 DASKALOPOULOS E.P. 129  
 DEDI H. 174  
 DEMETZOS C. 265,319  
 DEMONAKOU M.D. 267  
 DEMOPOULOU M. 326  
 DEPOORTERE I. 207,310  
 DIAMANTIS I. 273  
 DIEZ-FRAILE A. 310  
 DIMAS K. 265  
 DIMITRIADI. E. 131  
 DIMOGERONTAS G. 115,196  
 DOKOS CH. 133,230,246,250, 254,256,269  
 DONTAS I. 339  
 DOSI M. 124  
 DOULGERAKIS M. 288  
 DOUMA S. 322,343  
 DOUMAS M. 322,343  
 DRAKOPOULOS V. 126  
 DRAGO F. 101  
 DUKA D. 92  
 ECONOMOU D. 138  
 EKONOMOPOULOU M.T. 166  
 EMMANOUIL E.-N. 141  
 EVANGELOU A.M. 232  
 FELEKIS T. 319  
 FILIS K. 326  
 FLORDELLIS CH. 88, 185  
 FRANGOU H. 141  
 GABRYELAK T. 319  
 GALANOPOULOS A. 124,145, 300  
 GALANOPOULOU-COUVARI P. 95,339  
 GALIAGOUSI E. 322,343  
 GANOTOPOULOU A. 323  
 GARDIKIS K. 319  
 GEORGANTA E.-M. 152  
 GEORGIADOU G. 118  
 GEORGOPOULOS A. 265  
 GEORGOUSI Z. 152,214  
 GERASIMIDIS TH. 273  
 GIAGINIS C. 146,368  
 GIANNAKOULI M. 149  
 GIANNOPOULOU E. 149  
 GIANNOULIS M. 182  
 GKROUZMAN E. 221  
 GORGOLIS B. 326  
 GÖTHERT M. 83  
 GOTSI A. 193  
 GOULAS A. 174  
 GRAVANIS A. 93,119  
 GRIESBACHER T. 102  
 GRYPIOTI A.D. 267  
 HADJICOSTA C. 159  
 HADJIMICHAEL CH. 156  
 HADJIPAVLOU-LITINA D. 178  
 HARLAFTIS N. 273  
 HASAPOPOULOU E. 182  
 HATZIANTONIOU S. 265  
 HATZIAPOSTOULOU M. 201  
 HATZISOTIRIOU A. 163  
 HATZITHEOHARIS G. 273  
 HELA D.G. 329  
 HONKAKOSKI P. 85  
 HORVAT O. 276  
 IAKOVIDOU-KRITSI Z. 166, 291  
 ILIAS I. 169  
 ILIODROMITIS E.K. 107,  
 IONOV M. 319  
 IORDANIDOU M. 170  
 JAKOVLJEVIC M. 273,276  
 JAMURTAS ATH. 347  
 JANKOVIC S. 273,276  
 JOKIEL M. 319  
 KAKLAMANIS L. 107  
 KALFARENTZOS F. 264  
 KALOGEROPOULOU A. 195  
 KALOKASIDIS K. 174  
 KALOUSIS K. 133,246,250  
 KAMAT A. 217  
 KAMBAROUDIS A. 273  
 KANELLOS G. 304  
 KANI C. 176  
 KAPOUCRANIDOU D. 163,178  
 KARACHALIOS CH. 181  
 KARAGIANNI N. 323  
 KARAGIANNIDIS N. 193  
 KARAKIULAKIS G. 358  
 KARAKOULAS K. 320

- KARAMANLIS E. 273  
 KARAMOUZIS I. 182  
 KARAMOUZIS M. 182  
 KARANASTASI G. 291  
 KARKOULIAS G. 185  
 KARTALI N. 322,343  
 KASTRITIS E. 89  
 KATRAMADOU M. 329  
 KATSIABAS D.S. 189  
 KATSIKARIS K. 193  
 KESIDON F. 182  
 KILINDRIS T. 212  
 KLAGAS I. 138,304,348  
 KNÖSS W. 97  
 KOCH W.J. 224  
 KOKKAS B. 174  
 KOKKINOS D. 360  
 KONSTANDI M. 129,318  
 KONSTANDINIDIS E. 296  
 KONTOGIANNI K. 291  
 KOSMA K. 195,323  
 KOTAKIDOU R. 178  
 KOTSINAS A. 326  
 KOTSIU A. 198  
 KOURENTZI K.T. 267  
 KOURETAS D. 336,360  
 KOUROUNAKIS A. 238  
 KOUTSILIERIS M. 90  
 KOUTSIOUMPA M. 201  
 KOUTSONIKOLAS D. 256  
 KOUTSOVITI-  
 PAPADOPOULOU M. 203,207,  
 410  
 KOUVARAS E. 113,212  
 KOUVELAS D. 235,302,308,  
 320,355  
 KOUYOUMTZIS A. 133  
 KOUZELIS K. 115  
 KREMASTINOS D.TH. 107  
 KRITIS A. 304  
 KYPAROS A. 360  
 KYPREOS K. 185  
 KYRGIDIS ATH. 358  
 LAMBROPOULOU M. 122,297  
 LANG M.A. 129  
 LASKOS E. 323  
 LEONTIADIS L.J. 214  
 LEOTSAKOU C. 195  
 LIAGOURIS J. 256  
 LIAKOU A.I. 369  
 LIAKOU CH.I. 217,369  
 LIALIARIS T. 166  
 LIAPI C. 81,115,221,339  
 LIATSOS K. 195,323  
 LOGOTHETI H. 308  
 LOGOTHETIS CH. 217  
 LYMPEROPOULOS A. 224  
 MAGIATIS P. 107  
 MAGLARAS CH. 227,288  
 MAIMARI I. 230  
 MALAMAS F.M. 232  
 MANGOURA N. 109  
 MANOLOPOULOS C. 182  
 MANOLOPOULOS V.G. 170,  
 315  
 MANTA G. 235  
 MARKANTONIS S. 326  
 MARKOS R. 291  
 MARSELOS M. 124,129,131,  
 241,263,300,318  
 MASSOURIDOU N. 141  
 MATHIOUDAKIS B. 98  
 MATRALIS A. 238  
 MAVRAKANAS TH. 243  
 MAVRIDIS S.K. 189  
 MAVRIKAKI M. 242  
 MAVROGIORGOU M.C. 241  
 MAXWELL S. 103  
 MAZARAKOU G. 152  
 MELLIOS Z. 221  
 MICHALIDOU D. 182  
 MICHALIDOU E. 122  
 MICHALAKIS K. 169  
 MICHA-SCRETTAS M. 319  
 MIKELIS C. 201  
 MILIARAS G. 241  
 MINAS V. 119  
 MIOGLOU-KALOUPTSI E. 166  
 MIRONIDOU-TZOUVELEKI M.  
 133,159,230,243,246,250,254,  
 256,269,350,352  
 MIRTSOU V. 174  
 MITAKOU S. 107  
 MITIOS G. 169  
 MITSACOS A. 235  
 MOLYVA D. 174  
 MOURELATOS D. 166  
 MYKONIATIS M.G. 267  
 NAKAMURA K. 295  
 NANASSIS K. 276  
 NAZOS K. 259  
 NG TANG D. 217  
 NIFOROU A. 326  
 NIKOLAIDIS E. 315  
 NIKOLAIDIS M.G. 360  
 NIKOLAIDOU M. 131,263  
 NIKOLOUSSIS E. 141  
 NIKOPOULOU S. 169  
 NOMIKOS G.G. 242  
 PANAGI Z. 264  
 PANAGIS G. 242  
 PANAGOPOULOS P.K. 269  
 PANOUTSOPOULOS G.I. 267  
 PANTELIDOU M. 265  
 PANTOS K. 259  
 PAPACHRISTOU F. 122  
 PAPADIMAS G.K. 267  
 PAPADIMITRIOU E. 201,264  
 PAPADIMOULI P. 246  
 PAPADOPOULOS G. 344  
 PAPADOPOULOS J.S. 104  
 PAPADOPOULOS M. 296  
 PAPADOPOULOS N. 322,343  
 PAPADOPOULOS P. 227  
 PAPADOPOULOU-DAIFOTI Z.  
 91,124,145,176,295,300  
 PAPAETHIMIOU P. 322,343  
 PAPAGEORGIOU B. 182  
 PAPAIOANNIDOU P. 273,276,  
 279,282,285  
 PAPAIONANNOU A. 193  
 PAPAKONSTANTINOU E. 138,  
 358  
 PAPAKONSTANTINOU M.-P.  
 214  
 PAPALAMBROS A. 326  
 PAPALEXIS P. 347  
 PAPANIKOLAOU C. 273  
 PAPANIKOLAOU K. 176  
 PAPATHANASOPOULOS P.  
 88,185  
 PAPAZISIS G. 302,308,320,  
 355  
 PAPPAS I. 294,189  
 PAPPAS P. 131,241,263  
 PARASCHOS S. 107  
 PARAVA M. 227,288  
 PASCHOS C. 122  
 PEETERS TH.L. 207,310  
 PEHLIVANIDIS A. 176  
 PEJAKOV L. 273,276  
 PERELAS A. 339  
 PERREA D. 339  
 PETIDIS K. 322,343  
 PETRIDIS J. 170  
 PETROVIC J. 273  
 PIDONIA I. 182  
 PIPERAKIS M.M. 291  
 PIPERAKIS S.M. 291  
 PITSICALI A. 198  
 PITSIKAS N. 118,294  
 PITYCHOUTIS P.M. 295  
 PLAKAS S. 296  
 POLAKIS E. 297  
 POLISSIDIS A. 124,145,241

- POLYZOIDIS K. 241  
 PONTIKA M. 178  
 POURZITAKI C. 302,304,308,  
 320,355  
 PRINTZA ATH. 358  
 PSARRA TH.A. 203,310  
 PYRPASOPOULOU A. 322,  
 343  
 RAGIA G. 315  
 RASKOVIC A. 273  
 RENTESI G. 129,318  
 ROKAS E. 296  
 ROUMPOS V. 195  
 ROVLIAS A. 296  
 RUCINSKA A. 319  
 SABO A. 273,276  
 SAKADAMIS ATH. 138  
 SAKELLARIDIS N. 109,294  
 SAMPAIO C. 86  
 SAMPANOPOULOU E. 182  
 SARDELI C. 302,308,320,355  
 SARRIS M. 214  
 SAVVA S. 156  
 SKALTSAS S.D. 267  
 SCHAMASCH P. 347  
 SCRETTAS C.G. 319  
 SELVIARIDIS P. 276  
 SEMERTZIDIS P. 322,343  
 SHARMA P. 217  
 SIANNI A. 195,323  
 SIFFEL C. 291  
 SIGALA F. 326  
 SIGALAS P. 326  
 SIMOPOULOS C. 122  
 SIOGA A. 138  
 SKALTSOUNIS A.L. 107,336  
 SKANDALI N. 221  
 SKOPELITIS I. 193  
 SKOUROLIAKOU M. 264  
 SOUKI H. 329  
 SOURLAS V. 327  
 SOURLIS K. 267  
 SPANOS I. 296  
 SPANOU C. 336  
 SPYRAKI C. 124  
 STAVRINOY P. 241  
 STEELE B.R. 319  
 STEFOS T. 232  
 STROUBINI TH. 339  
 SUN J. 217  
 SYRROU M. 318  
 TAHMATZIDIS D. 355  
 TARANTILIS P.A. 118  
 TARAVIRAS S. 235  
 TARLATZIS B. 282  
 TAVRIDOU A. 170  
 TAVRIDOU A. 315  
 TESSEROMATIS C. 198  
 THEOCHARIS S. 146,221,368  
 THEOCHAROUS S. 156  
 THEODORAKIS M.J. 369  
 THEOHARIDES T.C. 99,105  
 THIELEMANS L. 207  
 THIJS TH. 207,310  
 THOMAS C.G. 232  
 TOMIC Z. 276  
 TRAPALI M. 339  
 TRIANTAFYLLOU A. 322,343  
 TRIARIDIS S. 358  
 TSAKIRIS S. 221  
 TSAKMAKI B. 344  
 TSANTILI-KAKOULIDOU A.  
 146,368  
 TSARTSALIS S. 269  
 TSATSOULIS A. 232  
 TSIOKANOS ATH. 347  
 TSIOKOU V. 113  
 TSIPTSIOS D. 227,288  
 TSIRELLA E. 243,250,353  
 TSITSIMPIKOU CHR. 347  
 TSONIS P.A. 295  
 TZAVARA E. 124,300  
 TZELLOS TH. 302,320,355,358  
 TZIROGIANNIS K.N. 267  
 VAGKA E. 126  
 VAHTSEVANOS K. 358  
 VARAMENTI E. 360  
 VASILAKI A. 212,327  
 VASILOPOULOS D. 323  
 VASSEILIADIS M.V. 170  
 VAVILIS D. 282  
 VAVILIS T. 141  
 VELICKOVIC-RADOVANOVIC  
 R. 273  
 VELO G. 273,276,279,282  
 VENAKI E. 169  
 VESKOUKIS A.S. 360  
 VLAHOVIC-PALCEVSKI V.  
 273,276  
 VRIONI G. 329,  
 XU L. 207  
 ZAMBOULIS C. 322,343  
 ZARROS A. 115,221  
 ZIRA A. 146,368  
 ZISOPOULOU S. 294  
 ZOGA A. 107  
 ZVINTZOU E. 358  
 YIANNAKOPOULOU E. 363

