

## Preface

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# The Multifaceted Aspects of Alzheimer's Disease: From Social to Molecular Problems

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The increasing aging of the population represents a great worldwide challenge in terms of the rising prevalence of chronic diseases and disability as well as social and health costs. Dementia is paradigmatic in many aspects: the respect and value that society will be able to give to elderly patients with dementia, the costs that will be considered as acceptable, and the care that will be offered to maintain patient dignity will become good indicators of a civilized society.

As such, it is becoming extremely urgent to translate basic science into clinical reality with the development of new drugs and treatments able to improve the care and management of, or even cure, persons suffering from the disease.

After the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Brain Aging and Dementia of the Italian Psychogeriatric Association, member of the International Psychogeriatric Association, held in Perugia, Italy, in October 2006 to celebrate the centenary of Alzheimer's first description of the disease, some of the speakers who attended the conference were invited to share, in this special issue of the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, their opinions, reflections, and knowledge on the multifaceted aspects of Alzheimer's disease. Sociological, epidemiological, clinical and biological aspects are proposed, with the aim of offering a wide overview on several topics that cover areas of research so different and, in the meantime, so strictly connected.