Dietary Fat and Neural Development

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The concept that dietary fats are capable of not only altering the polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) composition of neural tissue, but also can result in altered neural function is relatively new, and it is exciting research attention worldwide. For this reason we offered to organize a one-day symposium during the AOCS Annual Meeting & Expo at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas, which took place May 7–11, 1995. This symposium was entitled "Dietary Fat and Neural Development." The meeting was designed to bring together the leading workers in the field under the auspices of a learned society (most meetings on this topic are organized by individual formula companies) in an environment that allowed for frank and open discussion. The format of the meeting was based on that developed by the organizers in 1992 at the 3rd International Congress of EFA and Eicosanoids, the proceedings of which were published by AOCS Press in 1993. The topics were organized into three main themes—animal studies, PUFA metabolism in humans, and randomized clinical trials involving human infants. Each of the themes was presented as three 20-minute talks followed by at least 40 minutes of discussion. Both the general topic and the discussion-based format seemed to appeal to participants, and despite this event being held on the final day of the AOCS meeting, the room was packed all day and discussion was intense. The level of interest was such that a whole meeting devoted to the difficulties in carrying out research in this area is being sponsored by AOCS in Barcelona, November 7–9, 1996, under the title "PUFA in Infant Nutrition: Consensus and Controversies."

The present issue of *Lipids* contains the papers presented at the symposium in San Antonio and includes reviews and original research articles. We wish to thank Dr. Howard R. Knapp, Editor-in-Chief of *Lipids*, for reviewing the papers and for his careful attention to detail. We are pleased that the papers from this symposium have appeared in print in less than nine months from the date of the meeting. Finally, we would like to thank AOCS, Wyeth-Ayerst, Mead Johnson, Martek Biosciences, Nestle, and Ross Laboratories for their support.

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