

Padua Muscle Days 2006

Let me first thank Professor Carraro for his kind invitation to the Padua Muscle Days 2006. He did most of the organizing efforts. When we started our collaboration some years ago, he, as a muscle biologist, contributed his basic knowledge, I, as a Surgeon, shared my experience on muscle traumathology and muscle grafting in reconstructive surgery. Both we were aware of the many scientific and technical gaps. Both us were motivated by the hope to finally provide some clinically relevant information. Fruitful informal discussion produced ideas and research programs. We were in full agreement on a couple of points: 1. Clinical research was urgently in need of broader and deeper knowledge on muscle regeneration potentials and constrains; 2. Biological approaches and constructs are also needed to attain muscle reconstruction. During the following years, much important scientific information had been provided by the international community. In the last years the stem cell field, the development of promising bioengineered materials, the explosion of molecular genetics and of the genetic engineering seemed to promise that our goals could be at hands. Tissue engineering based on in vitro construction of tissue and organs provides some clinical applications. The concepts of Regenerative Medicine and of the Guided Healing extended to the surgical approaches. All together, this advancement is changing minds and practices on the healing process and how to redirect it from the natural evolution of scarring toward the more useful process of regeneration. To be part of this culture, and each of us contributing what is dictated by his professional role, has been very stimulating and effective in the programming, execution and critical evaluation of our research activities and results. Surely we did our best with enthusiasm and passion. Produced our work relevant fruits? I couldn't and I wouldn't evaluate it alone. What I can say is that the collaboration changed some of my personal opinions and that it significantly changed my views and approaches on "the problem of the muscle managements in reparative and reconstructive surgery". As usual, the list of the open queries is much longer than the list of accepted answers. The "muscle problem" needs a lot more research and even more discussions. The Meeting provides a forum: it is timely and relevant. Once again, thanks Professor Carraro!

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