Info
April 2011

Vacation Planning
Professors, senior lecturers, “forskarassistent” and PhD students get all vacation planned out during summer. If you have other plans on when to have vacation, please contact Lisette Eklund before April 30th. All others apply for vacation in Primula Webb.

Stipend legislation info meeting
As of April 1st there are new rules governing employment of former holders of scholarships. Research group leaders were recently welcome to a meeting to discuss background, risk mitigation and the way forward. Notes from that meeting can be found here (Swe).

ALF and faculty means
ALF-application info day May 11th at 16-18 in Belfragesalen. Contact: Erik.Isacsson@med.lu.se
The ALF-application round is open May 1st - May 27th. The faculty means application round is open May 1st - Aug 31st.

GMM- education
For work-environment responsibles. May 24th at 13:15 to approx 17, in the Spoletorp lecture hall, Spolegatan 1R. Last application date May 17th.

Courses in Swedish
Two courses are given, one for beginners and one for those who have some background in Swedish. The day-time courses comprise a total of 40 hours each. Application deadline: May 12th.

Course in English
Competence development means are available for people who teach in English on undergraduate and postgraduate level. The faculty offers one week intensive training in the UK. Report your interest before May 12th.

MedCUL courses fall 2011
MedCUL offers courses to support, inspire and provide pedagogical theory to everyone involved in teaching students at the medical faculty. Last application date for fall courses is May 1st.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Grant proposals are accepted online until May 19th to, for example;
* new approaches to cure HIV infection
* Explore nutrition for growth of children
* Apply synthetic biology to promote global health
* Create innovative ways to accelerate, sustain, and monitor eradication of the poliovirus.

The Novo Nordisk Fund
Grants for basic and clinical research in endocrinology. (Grants not available for cancer research.) Application deadline: 4 p.m. on May 31st.
PhD student Daniel Nebel has just adjusted the eyepiece of the microscope. It is Bengt-Olof’s turn to have a look: “The cells are really beautiful!” he exclaims over the powerful hum of the work bench fan.

It is Friday afternoon but D12 is still busy. Bengt-Olof and Daniel have decided to show me some endothelial cells they are cultivating.

“There are indications that oestrogens might have a protective effect against inflammation,” says Bengt-Olof Nilsson.

“The oestrogen production depends on the maturing ovaries and the menstrual cycle. When the menstrual cycle stops the oestrogen levels plummet. Certain diseases that are rare in young women become increasingly common when women enter menopause.”

Bengt-Olof motions to the sample in front of him: “We will provoke these blood-vessel cells with a bacterial toxin from *E.Coli* and then we will see if the harmful effects can be reversed by oestrogen,” he explains.

I know Bengt-Olof in his role as Head of the postgraduate studies. I didn’t know very much about his research, except that he is also trained in dentistry - a background that didn’t make any sense until I read the portrait of him that was written in the inaugural brochure. It read:

“During the time in life when women menstruate and ovulate oestrogen is produced that is thought to protect against both heart disease and periodontitis [Swe: tandlossning].”

Bengt-Olof Nilsson

Personally Bengt-Olof has a liberal attitude to sweets. But he does praise dental floss: “It’s definitely my favorite dental hygiene product! I’d bring it to a des(s)ert island.”

“Periodontitis is a classic inflammatory disease,” Bengt-Olof comments. “Together with a colleague I became interested in oestrogen in 1985. We read papers that made clear that oestrogen affected other organs than one might think.” Surprisingly it turns out that oestrogenreceptors are present in the gums [Swe: tandkött] as well as in the lungs, the blood vessels, the intestines and the brain!

If oestrogen is good for you oral hygiene, does that mean that women have better teeth than men? “Dental health is affected by many factors, for example smoking and flossing [Swe: användade av tandtråd], but periodontitis is rare in women under fifty and becomes increasingly common after menopause.”

Daniel turns my attention to the microscope again: “The endothelial cells grow in clusters and are tile-shaped like cobblestones [Swe: gatstenar],” he says. “Even a non-scientist has to agree that they are beautiful!” I decide to have a peak too.

Bengt-Olof says the nitrogen tank makes a big difference in the successful cell harvest.
We exit the cell-cultivation room to have a look. The tank is like a big fondue pot. It makes a gurgling sound as Bengt-Olof raises one of the handles. I catch a glimpse of liquid behind a cloud of vapor. “I spilled nitrogen on my foot once,” Bengt-Olof interjects, “it poured into my shoe. Man did that hurt!”

What’s the most common misunderstanding about oestrogen that you encounter?
People think that oestrogen is one hormone, when it is actually a group of hormones. In fact, oestrogens are also present in many plants.

I’ve heard that hormones from birth control pills that end up in nature cause sex change in fish - can plant oestrogen affect humans in return?

“Soy sauce is a source of plant oestrogen. Japan is a country where the population consumes a lot of soy sauce. Some scientists believe that this explains some of Japan’s low breast cancer statistics.”

If this is true it is a paradox: Other studies have shown that oestrogens are linked to an increased risk of breast cancer. But the Japanese incidence of breast cancer is one third of that in the Western countries.

Do you believe in oestrogen supplements for women in menopause?
“Complementary oestrogen have increased the risk of breast cancer, but at the same time decreased the risk of colon cancer and osteoporosis. The larger studies have been criticized for comprising relatively old women. Some say better answers can be found when the studies embrace finer age categories; oestrogen might prove to be beneficial in the fifties and early sixties but pointless later on.”

As an oestrogen expert, what’s your take on about sex versus gender differences?
“A woman after menopause is not very much different from a man when it comes to hormones. The same is true for children. So, even if hormones do account for differences, this influence is not permanent throughout our lives.”

I know you love working with the PhD students; what other aspects do you like about your work?
In general I am excited by the results of an experiment, finding patterns and effects. I also enjoy the understated encouragement you get when you get accepted in journals. Appreciating comments like ‘interesting study’ or ‘these experiments are carefully performed.’” Bengt-Olof smiles. “...If you can call that praise.”
Diana Kajsmark

This is Diana Kajsmark. She starts on Monday. As a former emergency ward nurse she’s well prepared for her new role as administrator for the undergraduate education. Welcome Diana!

“My name is Diana Kajsmark. I’m about to finish my two-year health and healthcare administration programme at Lernia in Malmö. My diploma project is about introducing lean health care working methods at the children’s obesity clinic in Malmö.”

“I’ve also worked as assistant nurse in the emergency ward. It was the medical emergency ward, so patients typically stayed for about one day. I like structuring and coming up with effective solutions and that job gave me a lot of experience in that.”

Wow! Do you have any tips on how one should act under pressure? Prioritizing is the key to keeping things running!

What will you be working with?
I will be seeing students all day. Agneta has also joked that there will be plenty of Xeroxing.

What did you want to become as a child?
I wanted to become a super skilled veterinarian and take care of all animals. In my spare time I help out in a stable close to Staffanstorp. I horseback ride.

Diana will work alongside Agneta Persson until Agneta retires in mid June.

Diana’s stress management tips:
1. Stop what you are doing.
2. Take a deep breath.
3. Decide what’s most important right now.
4. Decide what you can postpone an hour.
5. Decide what you can postpone one day.
6. Get to work on number 3!
Coaching or curling?

Last call!

May 10th at 12:15 in Belfragesalen

Session 1: high performing teams & creativity index
Session 2: the next student generation & supervision strategies

Tapas 16:30 - 18:00

Sign up at http://tinyurl.com/6gawsnp

A half day for PI:s at EMV May 10th!
Publications

with affiliation Department of Experimental Medical Science

Insulinotropic and Antidiabetic Effects of 17ß-Estradiol and the GPR30 Agonist G-1 on Human Pancreatic Islets.

Knockdown of GAD67 protein levels normalizes neuronal activity in a rat model of Parkinson's disease.

Transgenic Expression of Laminin alpha 1 Chain Does Not Prevent Muscle Disease in the mdx Mouse Model for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Systemic administration of Neuregulin-1ß(1) protects dopaminergic neurons in a mouse model of Parkinson's disease.


Transgenic Expression of Laminin alpha 1 Chain Does Not Prevent Muscle Disease in the mdx Mouse Model for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) is a severe neuromuscular disorder, and one of the most frequently encountered, but one for which there is at present no treatment. Laminin-111 protein therapy was recently shown to be a promising approach to prevent muscle disease in the mdx mouse model of DMD. The present study demonstrated that transgenic expression of laminin α1 chain in mdx animals, resulting in laminin-111 heterotrimer formation in mdx muscle, does not improve the dystrophic phenotype. The mdx mice overexpressing laminin-111 (mdxLMα1) display features of mdx littermates: dystrophic pattern of muscle biopsy, elevated creatine kinase levels, reduced muscle strength, and decreased sarcolemmal integrity. Increased expression of integrin α7 is not beneficial for mdxLMα1 muscle, and components of the dystrophin-glycoprotein complex are not restored at the sarcolemma upon laminin-111 overexpression. In summary, further studies are needed to verify the functionality of laminin-111 protein therapy in DMD and to describe the molecular events resulting from this approach.

Kinga Gawlik
Meanwhile

Happy Birthday Annette Jönsson!