SCIENCE

Cardiovascular Medicine

FRONTIERS IN BIOMEDICINE

While cardiovascular disease is still the number one killer in the Western world, researchers have been making major inroads on the problem, as this Special Issue shows. Indeed, as detailed on our Editorial page by pioneer cholesterol researchers M. S. Brown and J. L. Goldstein, insights into how the body handles cholesterol have already led to the development of new drugs that show great promise in reducing deaths from heart attack. And that may be only the beginning.

In recent work, researchers have identified a host of additional genetic factors that help determine whether the cardiovascular system stays healthy or breaks down. On the following pages, experts from this molecular frontier review some of the latest of this research: E. N. Olson and D. Srivastava look at the genes controlling the formation of the heart; R. P. Lifton surveys the genes that contribute to the development of high blood pressure, a strong risk factor for stroke and heart disease; and M. T. Keating and M. S. Sanguinetti examine the genes responsible for inherited cardiac arrhythmias and cardiomyopathies. In addition, G. H. Gibbons and V. J. Dzau review the ever-expanding list of potential targets for molecularly based therapies for vascular diseases, while J. L. Breslow surveys genetically engineered mouse models of atherosclerosis. (Also see the Report by Geisterfer-Lowrance *et al.* on a new mouse model of familial hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.)

The News report offers a discussion of emerging new therapies for stroke and what they mean for the health care system, as well as reports on new devices for treating diseased hearts and on the difficulties faced by Moscow's premier cardiology research institute since the Soviet Union dissolved.

Finally, we direct you to *Science* On-Line's Beyond the Printed Page (http://science-mag.aaas.org/science/feature/beyond/), where we provide a movie showing the development of the chick heart and a link to Cardiology Compass, a guide to help you navigate through the many sights and sounds of cardiology on the Internet.

–Paula Kiberstis and Jean Marx, Editors