



## Molecular Basis of Intestinal Epithelial Stem Cell Specification, Maintenance and Differentiation

Guest Editors:

**Dr. Marie-Isabelle Garcia**

Faculty of Medicine, Institut de Recherche Interdisciplinaire en Biologie Humaine et Moléculaire (IRIBHM), Université Libre de Bruxelles ULB, Brussels, Belgium

**Dr. Natalia Soshnikova**

Institute for Molecular Medicine and Research Center for Immunotherapy (FZI), University Medical Center of the Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, 55131 Mainz, Germany

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### Message from the Guest Editors

The small intestine has many vital functions, including absorption of nutrients, secretion of hormones and barrier in host defence against microorganisms. These functions of the small intestine depend on the correct specification and maintenance of differentiated epithelial cells. The continuous renewal of the epithelium is supported by Intestinal Stem Cells (ISCs). We know relatively well genetic factors that control self-renewal and differentiation of ISC population in homeostasis. Yet, we do not know whether each ISC responds equally to the differentiation stimuli. The molecular events that control de-differentiation and proliferation of the intestinal epithelium upon injury are unclear. Recent studies demonstrated that reciprocal interactions between ISCs and immune cells are essential for tissue repair without excessive proliferation. There are strong links between the regeneration of intestinal epithelium, diet-derived nutrients, gut microbiota and their metabolites. However, the mechanisms underlying these correlations are not well established. This special issue focuses on the molecular mechanisms regulating intestinal stem cell functions in homeostasis and disease.





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### Prof. Dr. Maurizio Battino

Department of  
Odontostomatologic and  
Specialized Clinical Sciences,  
Sez-Biochimica, Faculty of  
Medicine, Università Politecnica  
delle Marche, Via Ranieri 65,  
60100 Ancona, Italy

## Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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*International Journal of Molecular  
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MDPI, Grosspeteranlage 5  
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