

Welcome to the *Mediastinum*

Mediastinum is an interesting but less explored space compared to other parts of the human body. It is currently divided into three (anterior or retrosternal, middle or visceral, and posterior or paravertebral) compartments. Numerous benign or malignant disorders could happen here, including conditions pertinent to the primary structures, diseases extending from neighboring organs, or lesions manifesting systemic changes of the body. So when we talk about mediastinal diseases, we are not simply talking about primary mediastinal tumors or cysts. Mediastinum is often involved by metastatic diseases from other parts of the body, including lung cancer, esophageal cancer, lymphomas, and germ cell tumors. And mediastinal staging has long become an indispensable part in strategic decision making for these malignancies. It is important to remember that systemic infections (like acute bacterial mediastinitis or subacute tuberculosis) or clinical syndromes like amyloidosis could also happen here. Of course both benign and malignant diseases in the adjacent organs or compartments could easily affect mediastinum, like pneumomediastinum, descending mediastinitis, retrosternal goiter, and so on.

Given the complexity as well as the relative rarity of mediastinal diseases, understanding of the related disorders has been lagging behind as compared to other systems or organs. And therapeutic advances had also been sluggish if not stagnate. There has been no medical journal focusing specifically on mediastinum. Medical professionals have to resort to journals in various other specialties for relevant information that are often scattered, or even fall into oblivion, among more general literature. It is hard for them to update knowledge, and even harder for those who are interested in this field to track the progress systemically.

Mediastinum is a newly launched periodical that aims to promote better understanding of diseases in this unique part of the human body. It provides a professional platform for sharing of precious knowledge and experience among interested peers so as to finally benefit the patients. In addition to most up-to-date clinical and basic researches and state-of-the-art therapeutic approaches, this new journal will also be focusing emphatically on related education. More importantly, *Mediastinum* intends to attract attention from all specialties including multidisciplinary clinical teams (surgeons, physicians, radiation oncologists), pathologists, radiologists, basic research scientists, nurses, and trainees. It is our belief that only with joint effort and contribution from all specialties that increased understanding of mediastinal diseases could be readily developed and deepened. *Mediastinum* will thus spare no effort in gathering and providing high level evidence and useful resources for all healthcare professionals engaged in delivering quality care to their mediastinal patients.

‘More hands produce a higher flame’. The old wisdom works especially well with the course of dealing with mediastinal diseases which are rare but no less important. So welcome on board to *Mediastinum*!

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