

Preface

Cough is one of the most common complaints in clinical practice. In particular, chronic cough accounts for at one third of visits in specialist clinics, and severely affects patient's quality of life. In the 1980s, Dr. Richard Irwin established the anatomy-based diagnostic algorithm of chronic cough; since then, etiological diagnosis, treatment and mechanism of chronic cough have been studied in Europe, Japan, China, and many other parts of the world, resulting in development of cough guidelines in these countries and regions. Significant progress has been made in the treatment for chronic cough worldwide, however, there are still aspects to be further explored, such as the underlying mechanism and treatment strategy for chronic cough hypersensitivity, the relationship between virus infection and cough sensitivity, subjective evaluation and assessment of cough, development of antitussives, consensus and controversy across various cough guidelines. The First International Cough Conference was successfully held in Guangzhou, China on November 8, 2013 (*Figure 1*). It involved eight sessions, including the mechanism and causes of cough, respiratory tract infection and cough, treatment and management of cough, etc. *Journal of Thoracic Disease* invited international speakers to this conference to share their study on related hot topic, including viral respiratory infection and cough, sensory neural pathways regulating cough, new treatments for cough, cough hypersensitivity syndrome, antitussive development in the clinician's pipeline. Apparently, these keynote speeches covered not only basic research, but also clinical considerations and insight into the current cough guidelines. A special issue on the topic of chronic cough that concentrates state-of-art presentation at this commemorable event has been elaborated. This issue is believed to be informative on the latest advances and most concerned aspects about cough, and helpful for raising the awareness of practitioners. Still, there is a long way to go and let's join together to enhance our study, improving the diagnosis and treatment for chronic cough.



Figure 1 Being together-speakers from the First International Cough Conference (China, 2013).

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