

Press release:

The first symposium organized by GRIVES (**G**roupe de **R**echerche et d'**I**nnovation sur le **V**ieillessement **E**t la **S**anté), took place in Orleans on 24 November 2005. GRIVES was set up to foster a partnership between public and private research bodies working on all aspects of ageing.

The topic of Fragility and Ageing: from cells to men, brought together over 100 researchers, who presented and discussed their most recent findings on the many and varied areas implicated in ageing. Our ageing population prompted some scientist to examine the concept of “ageing gracefully”.

Ageing of the brain, the skin – which involves the appearance, muscle, bone – leading to fragility, and the hormonal system were the key topics, together with the underlying changes in many proteins and their genes. Maintained cell function and survival are essential for avoiding the disorders of tissue and organ structure and function that can lead to a loss of independence, or more seriously, to invalidity.

Of course, variety and balance are essential for maintaining our bodies and ensuring a reasonable life span despite our rather hectic life style, with its extremes of diets and uncertain reference points. Our bodies have developed natural mechanisms for protection, recycling waste removal and repair so that they can cope with the dysfunction and damage to cells and tissues that come with ageing. These systems often slow down with increasing age and become more susceptible to oxidative stress. Mankind is now able to take steps to improve the future of our ageing bodies, thanks to worldwide daily advances in research and development. Natural and synthetic antioxidants, stem cells and new drugs to restrict neurons loss reflect the hopes and objectives of research in many laboratories. Early diagnosis of fragility of older people by clinicians could also prevent triggering of the cascade of events that all too often render a person dependent, with all its major social and humanitarian consequences.

These various parameters clearly indicate that only a global, multiparameter approach will lead to advances in a domain as complex as anti-ageing medicine. To find out more, go to our web site www.grives-aging.com.