

Interview

## **An Interview with Prof. Andrew S Day**

*Recent Progress in Nutrition* Editorial Office

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**Prof. Dr. Andrew S Day**

### **1. Could You Please Tell Us Your Scientific Background?**

I am an academic Paediatric Gastroenterologist. After completing my paediatric training in NZ, I completed a paediatric gastroenterology fellowship at Sick Kids, Toronto, Canada. After that, I took up a joint clinical and academic role at Sydney Children's Hospital and the UNSW in Sydney, Australia.



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In 2009, I returned to NZ to take up my current clinical and academic roles. I have, however, maintained my positions (now honorary) in Sydney.

## **2. What is Your Main Research Area? What Got You Interested in this Research in the First Place?**

My main research focus is inflammatory bowel disease in children. Specific themes are nutrition and nutritional interventions, biomarkers, the interactions between the microbiome and the intestinal epithelium and outcomes (knowledge, epidemiology, etc.). I also have some research activities focusing on coeliac disease in children.

I developed my strong and ongoing focus on research whilst working at Sick Kids Hospital in Canada. My mentor there, Prof. Phil Sherman, encouraged and supported my initial and further research activities.

## **3. Could You Please Briefly Share Your Career Development Story with Us? And What Impressed You Most in Your Research Life?**

I completed my doctorate during and following my research fellowship in Toronto. Since then, I have worked hard to develop close collaborations with key researchers locally and internationally. I have worked to develop a strong and productive research team (undergraduate and postgraduate research students along with post-doctoral and other people). I have tried to guide and encourage young researchers and to assist them in their initial steps in the research journey.

Over time I have had a number of research grants and have maintained high productivity. I have more than 340 peer-review publications to date, with various other outputs (book chapters, etc.). I now contribute broadly to the research environment with grant reviews and various other academic activities.

## **4. Where Are Your Sources of Information? Where Do You Get the Latest News About Your Research Area or Where Do You Take Inspiration From?**

I follow the relevant literature closely. I learn from attendance at key scientific conferences.

## **5. Considering the Progress in Your Research Area, Could You Please Share with Us Some Hot Topics or Cutting-Edge Technologies in Your Research Field? And What Challenges and/or Developments that May Be Encountered in the Coming Years?**

Some of the key aspects of inflammatory bowel disease research are:

- Understanding the role(s) of the microbiome
- Understanding the relationships between diet/nutrition and the development and management of IBD
- New dietary approaches
- Diet as therapy and prevention
- Targeted management
- Personalised management
- Ensuring holistic care (not just drugs)
- Optimising outcomes
- Looking earlier than diagnosis - prediagnostic steps and earlier diagnosis

- IBD in families and others at risk: how to identify and how to reverse risk
- New therapies (biologics, etc.)

**6. Do You Also Offer Training and/or Further Education in Your Area?**

Yes, I have PhD and other research students.

**7. What Valuable Suggestions or Experiences Would You Like to Share with Young Scholars Regarding How to Be a Professional Researcher?**

Read, learn, develop good habits, develop relationships with mentors.

**8. What Is Your Long-Term Research Goal?**

Enhance the care and outcome of children with IBD and their families.  
Advance our understanding of the pathogenesis of IBD, one day leading to a cure.

**9. What Are the Recent Research Trends That You, As a Scholar, Would Suggest *Recent Progress in Nutrition* to Observe and to Follow?**

Impacts of nutrition upon the microbiome and how these aspects interact  
Impacts of dietary choices/patterns upon disease  
Westernization of diet/food – impact of additives/preservatives/processing  
Impact of healthy food choices (dietary patterns) upon health and well-being  
Role of focused dietary interventions – especially for chronic disease states

**10. What Attracts You to Join the Editorial Board of *Recent Progress in Nutrition*?**

Importance of diet and nutrition for children overall.