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Update on fascial nomenclature

Dear Editor

The recent articles 'A fascia and the fascial system' (Stecco and Schleip, 2016) and 'Defining the fascial system' (Adstrum et al., 2017) by our group, in this journal, were complemented by a well substantiated comment by Scarr (2017).

In addition, several other experts responded in writing to us with numerous suggestions about additional changes in the wording of our proposed definition of 'the fascial system'. This motivated us to continue our ongoing work and to thoroughly discuss all received proposals within our group. Based on these subsequent discussions we suggest the following editing change to the previously suggested definition of 'The fascial system':

"The fascial system consists of the three-dimensional continuum of soft, collagen containing, loose and dense fibrous connective tissues that permeate the body. It incorporates elements such as adipose tissue, adventitiae and neurovascular sheaths, aponeuroses, deep and superficial fasciae, epineurium, joint capsules, ligaments, membranes, meninges, myofascial expansions, periosteal, retinacula, septa, tendons, visceral fasciae, and all the intramuscular and intermuscular connective tissues including endo-/peri-/epimysium. The fascial system surrounds, interweaves between, and interpenetrates all organs, muscles, bones and nerve fibers, endowing the body with a functional structure, and providing an environment that enables all body systems to operate in an integrated manner." (changed wording in *italic font*).

Note that the last sentence in the previous version started with "The fascial system interpenetrates and surrounds all organs ...". We included the word 'interweaves' as this expression relates even more clearly to fascial system architecture and functioning.

As you will recognize, we only edited a small portion in this definition of 'the fascial system'. Although we thoroughly discussed several other editing suggestions, we decided to leave these other portions unchanged. This was based on our attempt of balancing the often-opposing suggestions received from different professional backgrounds, on us consulting several respected dictionaries, as well as on acknowledging the fact, that language will always continue - at least to some extent - to carry different meanings for different individuals, based on their language-related professional and personal experience.

Concerning the definition of 'a fascia' (Stecco and Schleip, 2016) we decided to leave this definition with the current version, at least until we receive a related feedback from the *Federative International Programme of Anatomical Terminologies* (FIPAT).

We know that our recent nomenclature suggestions have been received by FIPAT, a group whose work we highly respect. However,

this group has not yet come to a final agreement about them. As some readers will remember, our recent definition of 'a fascia' had been formulated with the intention of maintaining a very high congruence with the current 'fascia' definition of this group, as published on page 33 of the 'Terminologia Anatomica' (*Federative International Programme on Anatomical Terminologies* [FIPAT] 2011).

Based on this background, our group decided to wait until we hear from FIPAT, although we already noted down several possible improvements for a future re-edited version.

We do not consider our job as completed, but will continue to discuss possible adaptations and other improvements in fascial related nomenclature.

We invite the readers of this journal to continue supporting our work with detailed suggestions. We also thank all those who already communicated their suggestions to us in the past. We hope that our combined efforts will help to facilitate clear and unambiguous international, interdisciplinary, and inter-professional communication about fascia.

Fascia Nomenclature Committee (FNC) of the Fascia Research Society.

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