

THE FIRST MEDITERRANEAN SYMPOSIUM OF COMPREHENSIVE JOINT CARE

Fritz Müller – 3rd year medical student

For the 5th, 6th and 7th October the medical students of REGIOMED Medical School were invited by Professor Dr. Primorac to participate at *THE FIRST MEDITERRANEAN SYMPOSIUM OF COMPREHENSIVE JOINT CARE* in Split.

At the 5th of October, 18 students from all three years arrived in small groups at the Hotel *LE MÉRIDIEN LAV* in Split, venue of the congress. Many of them arrived at their very first medical conference and those just enrolled into first year of their studies had the unique chance to experience the atmosphere and procedure of such an event at the very beginning of their education.

Registration was quickly done and there was plenty of time left, so the students could gather themselves and those not knowing each other yet had the opportunity to get in touch with each other.

When the Conference started at 09.00am, REGIOMED medical students managed to sit together, taking up 3 ½ rows of the left spectators block. After short welcome speeches the students were to be surprised as the first lecturer, Dr. Anne Agur, turned out to be co-author of their Anatomy book, providing an incredibly detailed look into the innervations of several joints.

An equally detailed, but also clear and well guided view into ultrasound imaging by Dr. Moriggl and imaging of osteoarthritis by Dr. Borić followed, providing a link between anatomy and digital visualisation.

The topics turned to a pathological point of view, discussing osteoarthritis and its impact on joints, patients as well as the population and approaches in four consecutive lectures. In the end all four lecturers were participating in an open panel discussion, interactively answering questions from the moderator Dr. Gofeld and the audience, including the REGIOMED students.

The last lecture before lunch was a short presentation of several pharmaceutical products and their use.

The lunch break provided the opportunity to not only restore ones energy, but also for exchange. Not just between us students ourselves, but as well exchange with physicians from the audience which were very encouraging and gave us impressions of their daily work. This first chance to communicate with several professionals should present us with an additional surprise on the next day. Furthermore Dr. Primorac took the time to give an encouraging pep talk and walked us through the poster presentation displayed in the conference room.

“This event gave us an impression of what we can achieve in this field of work, what ambition and passion in and for medicine really means.

In summary we can say, that this weekend was a special experience and above all a great start into our medical studies.”

-Annika Schulz, 1st year medical

In the afternoon the lectures continued, providing detailed insights into regenerative medicine. The importance of sonography in invasive procedures, usage of mesenchymal stem cells (MSC), harvesting of MSCs in Lipoaspirate from adipose tissue through Lipogem® technology therapy and the use of Platelet Rich Plasma were presented. Even though being very challenging topics, they provided a glance into the future of medicine and what we as future physicians can expect as an expansion to our studies. Again the presentations ended with an open panel discussion where all lecturers gave answers to the questions from the moderator Dr. Primorac and the audience.

"I personally found Dr. Tremolada's presentation of his Lipogem method and device using mesenchymal stem cells from adipose tissue most astonishing. I was absolutely overwhelmed that Dr. Tremolada has found a method making purification of mesenchymal stem cells possible in normal clinical surroundings."

-Johanna Lippuner, 2nd year medical student

Saturday morning provided two lectures covering the field of joint replacement and the associated regional anaesthesia, ending in an open panel discussion which gave us the chance to observe active exchange of knowledge and opinions between professionals in the same field of work.

The forenoon continued with two lectures concerned with the localized treatment of chronic pain with Minimally-Invasive Joint Denervation and the treatment via Peripheral Nerve Stimulation. Once more the two Lecturers took part in an open panel discussion, answering questions from both, moderator and audience.

The academic part of the day ended with a presentation about Shoulder Pain Treatment with Pulsed Radiofrequency.

For the afternoon program it was originally scheduled by the organizers to go on a sailing trip to the Island of Brač to which we students have been invited as well. Due to bad weather there was a change of plan and the participants were taken to the mountain of Klis, visiting the Etno-Agro-Park *Stella Croatica*. This trip was an even greater opportunity for us students to get in touch with medical professionals from all over the world, covering different professions. Our experience was that everybody was very welcoming, open and interested in us, our studies, our interests and progress, motivating us even more to achieve our goals. Their care went so far that one participant some of us already have been talking to on the day before, Anaesthesiologist Dr. Christopher DiMeo, spontaneously offered us students to come back to the venue after the trip. His idea was to provide us a beginner's workshop in sonography, teaching us the basics of the usage of ultrasound. Needless to say his offer was met with great enthusiasm.

"It was a great opportunity and experience to start with the symposium right at the beginning of my studies. I got the chance to meet some really impressive people, be able to talk to them and to ask questions. That was awesome!"

-Rebecca Schumann, 1st year medical student

The destination of our excursion to Klis turned out to be a beautifully made, very detailed replica of a traditional Croatian farm. We had a guided tour through the site, providing us with information

about the Etno-Agro-Park, how life used to be on farms like this and how they are producing their traditional Dalmatian delicacies. These are still made the same way, old fashioned and manually, even though in much more modern buildings than their farm replica. The guided tour ended with the chance to taste most of their products, getting additional information to several of them. Of course most of us could not resist buying some of their dainties as souvenirs.

From there on the tour continued to a typical Dalmatian “Konoba” restaurant for lunch. Here professionals and students sat completely intermingled, continuing to provide the base for communication with the professionals, not just about medical topics, but also very pleasant small talk accompanied with live Croatian music.

The arrival back at the venue of the conference would have been the end of the scheduled program for the REGIOMED students. But as previously announced, Dr. DiMeo demonstrated a sonography device in a spontaneous workshop. In about one hour students were taught the basics of ultrasound and how to use it.

With this last, unexpected, experience the last day for all of us REGIOMED students at the conference came to a very pleasant end, completing two great and demanding days.

In order to finish my report a short quotation from one of our students, which is equally valid for all of us participants: “We personally want to thank Professor Primorac and Dean Prof. Zoran Đogaš again for the opportunity to be able to attend this Symposium and we are looking forward for more to come.”