NEWS

The 11th Ljudevit Jurak International Symposium on Comparative Pathology
Zagreb, June 9-10, 2000

The 11th Ljudevit Jurak International Symposium on Comparative Pathology, held in Zagreb, Croatia, June 9-10, 2000, under the auspices of the European Society of Pathology and Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia, was organized by the Department of Pathology, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital, Zagreb, Croatia (President, Professor M. Belicza); Institute of Pathology, Leopold Franzens University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria (Vice-president: Professor G. Mikuz); and Department of General Pathology, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia (Vice-president: Professor Ž. Grabarević). The Symposium was a good opportunity for experience exchange, and comparison of ideas and results of investigations between human and veterinary medicine.

After the opening ceremony, the Ljudevit Jurak Award ceremony for contribution to the advancement of comparative pathology took place. The awards were presented by Professor Mladen Štulhofer, president of the Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences, to Professors H.G. Fassbender, Mainz, Germany, and D. Ferluga, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The main topic of the Symposium was Comparative Pathology of Tumors in 2000. Memorial lectures were presented by M. Bračko, Ljubljana, Slovenia, and R. Steinbeck, Kiel, Germany. Other invited speakers were F. Silvestri, Trieste, Italy; K. Gall-Trošelj, Zagreb, Croatia; Z. Čulig, Innsbruck, Austria; F. del Piero, Padua, Italy; M. Reinacher, Giessen, Germany; H.G. Fassbender, Mainz, Germany; and W.L. Ragland, Georgia, USA. Free papers were presented as oral presentations or posters. The authors from Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Slovenia and Croatia presented recent data on the diagnosis, protocols, and pathohistologic and immunohistochemical findings in different human and animal tumors. Posters on different subjects including human and veterinary medicine were presented mostly by younger authors from Italy, Brasil, Iceland, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia.

In the Herman Jurak Round Table on Rheumatologic Diseases, an interesting invited lecture on the value of animal models for the pathogenetic evaluation of rheumatoid arthritis was presented by Professor W.G. Fassbender from Germany.

During the Symposium, two slide seminars were held. The slide seminar on Cytopathology of Pleural and Peritoneal Effusions was organized by Dr. A. Pogačnik, Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Drs. B. Petrović and H. Čupić from Zagreb, Croatia. The other slide seminar on Comparative Pathology of Human and Animal Tumors was organized by Professor G. Mikuz from Innsbruck, Austria. The cases were presented by Professors S. Drnhofer, Innsbruck, Austria; M. Reinacher, Giessen, Germany; F. Gartner and F. Schmitt, Porto, Portugal; and B. Kruslin, Zagreb, Croatia.

At the end of the Symposium, a poster discussion and poster presentation award session were held. The Poster Presentation Award was presented to S.H. Bambir, S. Helgason, F. Marino and B. Macri from Iceland and Italy.

The next Symposium will be held on June 1-2, 2001, with gastrointestinal pathology as the main topic.

Božo Kruslin

Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course
Dubrovnik, June 5-10, 2000

This year’s Healthy Life Style and Prevention of Stroke Postgraduate Course, organized by the Inter-University Center Dubrovnik, Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia, and Croatian Stroke Society was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, June 5-10. Directors of this international postgraduate course are Professor Vida Demarin, University of Zagreb; Professor Roman Haberl, University of Munich; Professor Kurt Niederkorn, University of Graz; and Assist. Professor Tanja Rundek, Columbia University, New York. Since the first Course in 1990, it has been traditionally held every year at the beginning of June.

More than thirty participants from all over Croatia (Zagreb, Osijek, Karlovac, Koprivnica, Zadar, Virovitica, Slavonski Brod, Vinkovci, Dubrovnik, Labin and Kaštel) as well as from the United States, Germany, Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the Course. The Course was opened by one of its directors, Professor Vida Demarin, who briefly described the history of the Course from the beginning in 1990 to the present. The Course began as gathering of a group of enthusiasts, having since grown into a respected meeting of distinguished experts dealing with stroke. Stroke risk factors, and new insights in the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of stroke are presented at the Course. The main characteristic of the Course is that it enables exchange of knowledge between renowned experts and young colleagues as well as comparison of data on stroke from various
Sudden Cardiac Death: How to Identify and Treat Patients at Risk?

4th Symposium of the Working Group on Arrhythmias of the Croatian Cardiac Society
Zagreb, April 7, 2000

The 4th Symposium of the Working Group on Arrhythmias of the Croatian Cardiac Society was held in Hotel Inter-Continental in Zagreb, on April 4, 2000, under the auspices of the...
Working Group on Arrhythmias of the European Society of Cardiology.

This year’s Symposium was dedicated to sudden cardiac death with special reference to diagnostic and therapeutic modalities. There are several reasons why this issue was chosen. Despite significant advances in the management of patients with life-threatening arrhythmias, sudden cardiac death accounts for some 50% of total cardiac deaths. During the last ten years, a large number of clinical researches have been performed in this field of cardiology that required evaluation and consensus for daily clinical practice. Finally, Croatia has not yet established a registry of sudden cardiac death, patients at risk are treated mainly conservatively, and implantation rate of cardioverter-defibrillators is very low.

Prominent European and Croatian cardiologists were invited to the Symposium to answer these questions. Structurally, the Symposium was divided into four sessions, including the most interesting aspects of sudden cardiac death.

In the session on Epidemiology and Mechanisms, the main topic were the mechanisms of sudden cardiac death and profiles of patients at risk. Among presentations, mention should be made of the lecture on sudden cardiac death in competitive athletes, presented by Professor F. Furlanello, a renowned Italian cardiologist from Trento. Other speakers in this session were Dr. M. Jakić (Osijek), Professor P. Rakovec (Ljubljana), Dr. A. Jović (Zadar), and Dr. Z. Batinić (Krapinske Toplice). The session on Identification of Patients at Risk was very important, because all methods for risk stratification of sudden cardiac death were presented critically, with due mutual consideration and in relation to different heart diseases. In this session, papers were presented by Professor K. Birtić (Zagreb), Dr. D. Puljević (Zagreb), Professor L. Zaputović (Rijeka), Dr. K. Stanić (Rijeka), and Professor A. Šmalcelj (Zagreb). In the session on Prevention of Sudden Cardiac Death, the main topic was primary prevention of sudden cardiac death, dealing with prophylactic measures aimed at reducing sudden death rates in cardiac patients by then free from any history of life-threatening arrhythmic events. Professor Ž. Reiner (Zagreb), Professor C. Torp-Pedersen (Copenhagen), Dr. B. Radić (Zagreb), Professor P. Touboul (Lyon), and Professor H. Klein (Magdeburg) presented the latest data and current state of the art on the use and efficacy of statins, ACE inhibitors, antiarrhythmic drugs, and cardioverter-defibrillators in patients identified to be at risk. The last session on Treatment of Patients at Risk was dedicated to therapy for high-risk patients in special clinical conditions such as heart failure (Professor V. Goldner, Zagreb), hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (Assist. Professor D. Petrač, Zagreb), survived cardiac arrest (Dr. R. Cappato, Milan), and coronary revascularization (Professor K. Steinbach, Vienna). A number of very important conclusions were derived from this session. The presence of heart failure significantly increases the incidence of sudden cardiac death. The risk of sudden death in hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is low, and therapy is still directed to patients who have experienced life-threatening ventricular arrhythmias. Implantable cardioverter-defibrillators are superior to antiarrhythmic drugs in prolonging survival in patients with survived cardiac arrest or unstable ventricular tachycardia. At this time, there are no data on the effects of anti-ischemic interventions (PTCA, CABG) as preventive measures for sudden cardiac death. Results from a small group of patients show that the prognosis of patients in whom anti-ischemic intervention is possible is equal to the prognosis in patients treated with an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator.

Summaries of all invited lectures have been printed in the Book of Abstracts. More than 300 participants from different areas of Croatia as well as from Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the Symposium. The Symposium was evaluated according to the Croatian Medical Chamber regulations, and all participants received a certificate of attendance.

Dubravko Petrač