

## The Committee for tumors of the Department of Medical Sciences, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Department of Oncology and Nuclear Medicine, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital Center organized the 34<sup>th</sup> Breast Diseases scientific meeting that was held on September 26<sup>th</sup> at the Academy library.

### AUTHOR:

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Welcoming speeches were held by **academician Zvonko Kusić**, and **Željko Soldić**, president of the Organizing committee.

**Academician Zvonko Kusić** gave tribute to the late **academician Šime Spaventi**, founder and first Head of the Department of Oncology and Nuclear Medicine in honor of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In over three decades, the Academy's conference on breast diseases has become one of the best professional and scientific symposia in the Academy as well as Croatian medicine in general. This tradition has resulted in a reputable and high quality meeting where scientists and clinicians from across Croatia involved in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer present the latest advances and treatment guidelines with a personalized approach to breast cancer, each year accompanied by a traditional compendium of scholarly papers.

This year we continued with a thematic symposium focused on triple-negative breast cancer.

In the chairing committee of the first part of the meeting were **Davor Tomas**, **Marko Petrovečki**, **Ilijan Tomaš** and **Melita Perić Balja**. **Snježana Ramić** spoke about which genes should be included in a hereditary breast cancer panel. **Toni Čepnja** talked about how to define triple-negative breast cancer. **Karolina Bolanča** discussed about all radiological aspects of triple-negative breast cancer. **Kristina Urch** talked about the impact of increased body mass index in breast cancer patients. In the second part of the meeting the chairing committee included **Rado Žic**, **Natalija Dedić Plavetić**, **Ingrid Belac Lovasić** and **Vesna Telesmanić Dobrić**. **Andrej Roth** spoke about the impact of prophylactic mastectomy on risk reduction and survival in women with germline BRCA mutations. **Majana Soč** talked about integrated PARP inhibitor and radiotherapy treatment in patients with triple-negative breast cancer. **Marina Popović** spoke about the importance of genetic counselling for relatives of women with germline BRCA mutation carriers. **Josipa Flam** presented data about neoadjuvant and adjuvant chemotherapy in patients with T1N0 triple-negative breast cancer. In the last, third part, of the meeting **Paula Podolski**, **Martina Bašić Koretić**, **Tajana Silovski** and **Marija Ban** were chairs and **Branka Petrić Miše** discussed tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes and the neutrophil-to-lymphocyte ratio as predictive biomarkers of response to neoadjuvant treatment in triple-negative breast cancer. **Mario Nalbani** presented

optimal management of high-risk patients following neoadjuvant therapy for triple-negative breast cancer. **Petra Jakšić** answered the question are earlier-line treatment strategies with antibody-drug conjugates feasible in metastatic triple-negative breast cancer. **Anuška Budisavljević** discussed can rational combination approaches improve the efficacy of PARP inhibitors and overcome treatment resistance

As always an important part of the meeting were dynamic panel discussions with leading experts in breast cancer patients care, who tried to resolve dilemmas and answered key questions that we encounter in our daily work in a multidisciplinary fashion.

The scientific meeting was concluded by **Marijana Jazvić** emphasizing that the Breast Diseases scientific meeting, with 12 exceptional and interesting lectures has once again shown that continuous work based on scientific findings with a multidisciplinary approach brings great advances in breast cancer treatment, with great impact on patient survival and quality of life.

# Report on the 12<sup>th</sup> Scientific Meeting on Prostate Tumors Organized by Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital Center and the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (CASA) Friday, November 28, 2025 – CASA Library Hall, Zagreb

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The 12th traditional multidisciplinary scientific meeting on prostate cancer, jointly organized by Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital Center and the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (CASA), was held on Friday, November 28, 2025, in the historic library premises of CASA. This year's meeting gathered eighteen invited speakers who delivered comprehensive updates across the full spectrum of prostate cancer care — from epidemiology and diagnostics to surgical innovation, radiotherapy, systemic therapy, and molecular oncology.

## KEY SCIENTIFIC HIGHLIGHTS

### Epidemiology and Diagnostics

New epidemiological data presented at the meeting demonstrated a notable improvement in 5-year survival for patients with advanced prostate cancer, reflecting advancements in multidisciplinary management. Updates in diagnostic imaging included:

- New nuclear medicine tracers and radiopharmaceuticals offering diagnostic and therapeutic opportunities beyond PSMA-based radioligands.
- Adaptation of bi-parametric MRI protocols for staging, aiming to streamline imaging workflows and reduce variability while maintaining diagnostic accuracy.

Speakers also emphasized the evolving role of genetic biomarkers in refining risk stratification, prognostication, and treatment decision-making — complementing, and in some cases challenging, traditional TNM and clinical risk models.

### PATHOLOGY, SURGERY, AND INNOVATIONS IN LOCAL TREATMENT

#### Pathology

Advances in molecular pathology and biomarker interpretation were discussed, highlighting how genomic and transcriptomic signatures are increasingly informing treatment decisions in both localized and advanced disease.

#### Robotic and Surgical Advances

With four robotic surgical platforms currently operating in Croatia, experts presented innovations in:

- Surgical techniques to enhance urinary continence and post-operative sexual function.

- Integration of novel imaging techniques to better identify disease burden and optimize surgical planning.
- The ongoing debate on the therapeutic value of lymph node dissection in high-risk prostate cancer, where consensus remains elusive.

### RADIOTHERAPY BLOCK

The radiotherapy session underscored rapid technological progress and the transformative impact of AI:

- Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming integrated into multiple stages of the radiotherapy workflow, from contouring to plan optimization, with an expected substantial effect on efficiency and consistency.
- Expanding evidence supports particle therapy (protons and heavy ions) as a modality of interest for selected prostate cancer patients.
- Stereotactic radiotherapy is increasingly used not only in the oligometastatic setting but also in selected cases of castration-resistant prostate cancer, with growing evidence for meaningful clinical benefit.
- A gastroenterology perspective was provided on radiation proctitis, including diagnostic strategies and evolving therapeutic approaches for this challenging toxicity.

### SYSTEMIC THERAPY AND EMERGING CONCEPTS

The final session focused on systemic therapy, showcasing several cutting-edge developments:

- Novel androgen receptor pathway-directed therapies, especially in the context of locally advanced disease with intact prostate, are reshaping treatment paradigms more profoundly than in the biochemically recurrent setting.
- A guest speaker from Austria provided mechanistic insights into bipolar androgen therapy (BAT) and discussed how this unconventional approach may be rationally integrated with existing treatment modalities.
- Reasons behind the limited efficacy of immunotherapy in prostate cancer were explored, contrasted with the transformative impact of immunotherapy in other malignancies.
- Widespread integration of next-generation sequencing (NGS) across Croatian cancer centers was highlighted, reinforcing the role of molecular profiling in guiding therapy.

- The evolving place of PARP inhibitors, both as monotherapy and in rational combinations, was discussed in detail — including emerging data supporting their use in castration-sensitive prostate cancer.

### CONCLUSIONS

The meeting concluded with a dynamic discussion centered on how to incorporate these scientific and clinical advances into everyday prostate cancer care in Croatia. The overarching theme was the importance of coordinated multidisciplinary management, timely adoption of innovative technologies, and continued investment in research and precision oncology infrastructure.