

Europe's collective knowledge

ExMEx Forum, Berlin, March 26 to 28: Minimally invasive orthopaedic therapy

A special attraction in Berlin awaits European hip and knee surgeons in March: The EFORT-ExMEx (Experts meet Experts) will gather and discuss experiences from across the continent relating to state-of-the-art, minimally invasive orthopaedic therapy. Participants can expect best-practice models as well as future trends and time frames for work-in-progress solutions to the common incision-site problem.

For orthopaedic and trauma surgeons, Berlin will most certainly be a worthwhile visit this coming spring. From March 26th to 28th, the cosmopolitan capital between the Spree and Havel Rivers will host the EFORT ExMEx Forum on the theme of minimally invasive hip and knee surgery. Although due to the exciting themes and wealth of information presented at the EFORT ExMEx Forum, participants may find the time to absorb the loveliness of the German capital limited by their desire to attend the stimulating discussions.

"The ExMEx Fora constitute the highest and most demanding level of EFORT's advanced training programs," explained Prof. Fritz Uwe Niethard, director of the University Clinic for Orthopaedics and Traumatology in Aachen, Germany. "Experienced orthopaedists and traumatologists are offered a forum here for the exchange of knowledge and frank discussions of their experiences, from which the lecturers as well as the surgical-special-

ist audience can profit enormously. Knowledge from throughout Europe, accumulated among the most diverse countries and health systems, will be quasi synchronized this way. When we disband, each will be aware of the current status in the various regions. Best-practice-models will crystallize out of this and it will become clear as to which of the potentially very different approaches will be best solution for an individual health care system."

Minimally invasive hip and knee surgery for exploratory reasons has established itself in some areas but not in others. "Ambiguity exists not only with respect to indications, but also in regard to general economic conditions, so that navigation and robotics within the EU are implemented very differently," according to Prof. Niethard. "It will be extremely worthwhile to find out how this is viewed and is being dealt with elsewhere. Medically as well as economically; If it is a question of whether the acquisition of expensive navigation technology is reasonable, or rather, which modifications might at best make them commercially sustainable."

That ExMEx has been invited to Berlin as a tribute to one of the most exciting projects in the field of navigation. "OrthoMIT – the orthopedic operating room of the future" is being developed at a number of German universities under the direction of Prof. Niethard.

"The acronym stands for "minimal-invasive orthopaedic therapy" and is a joint research project, under German public research sponsorship, with a goal to develop

an integrated platform for minimal invasive interventions. Flexible modules for hip, knee and spinal surgery should make it possible to adapt therapeutic procedures to individual situations," Prof. Niethard said.

At the beginning of the ExMEx Forum, previous orthoMIT results will be introduced in three subgroups:

- **Smart Intraoperative Imaging** (themes, inter alia: Zero-Dose-C-Arm-Navigation; robot-supported C-arm X-ray imaging; 3D ultrasonic imaging and referencing of MRT data for the completion; and updating of intraoperative information)

- **Smart Knee and Hip Surgery** (themes, inter alia: marker-and-tracking free knee endoprosthesis; ultrasonic-based identification of landmarks for individual biomechanical planning models; modular sterilizable 5DOF-minirobot for minimally invasive hip-revision prosthesis, knee endoprosthesis; and endoscopic spinal surgery)

- **Smart Integration** (themes, inter alia: OP table steering for the reduction of performance limiting body posture; and innovative operating concept through remote pointer)

"The heading over this could read 'optimization through integration,'" Prof. Niethard suggested. "It is a matter not just of an ultra-modern OP table itself, but rather of all the encompassing processes that unfold prior to the operating room as well. Technically it is one of the greatest challenges – and concurrently one of the greatest expected advancements – to create optimized interfaces.

Previously, for instance, equipment for knee endoprosthesis and for hip endoprosthesis were not compatible; the circuit points and formats for imaging devices were incom-

patible, as was much else. Because of that, we are working together with the engineering branch in making far-reaching progress toward creating a common basis – a theme that has to be resolved if we are to integrate further technical advancement in an economically supportable way."

Therefore the ExMEx-Meeting could appeal not just to surgeons, but to the budget-conscious hospital manager as well. The latter will be able to find out when integrated – and therefore cost-synergetic – navigation systems will be ready for action.

"They could significantly lower the threshold from which the newest and most patient-friendly state of orthopaedic surgery also becomes economically feasible," Prof. Niethard emphasizes.



Fritz Uwe Niethard

info For more information please visit the EFORT portal: www.efort.org/exmex/berlin2010

The Sum of European Experience

The EFORT 2010 Congress in Madrid



Maurilio Marcacci

MADRID – BOLOGNA. The forthcoming EFORT Congress, already the 11th of its kind, will once more bring together the extensive European Family of Orthopaedists and reaffirm its position as the leading scientific community in the world, according to Professor Maurilio Marcacci. Prof. Marcacci is full professor at the University of Bologna Medical School and head of the IX Orthopaedic Divi-

sion and Biomechanics Laboratory at the Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute. By sharing and discussing a variety of approaches to orthopaedics that historically evolved in different parts of Europe, Congress participants will benefit from an EFORT event that focuses on hard scientific data derived through evolutionary more than revolutionary developments in all the subspecialties of orthopaedics and trauma medicine.

Prof. Marcacci, why should an orthopaedist or traumatologist with his or her already crammed schedule reserve June 2nd – 5th, 2010 for a trip to Madrid?

Marcacci: The answer is very simple: All the specialties and subspecialties of orthopaedics and traumatology from throughout Europe will be represented there under the umbrella of EFORT. In many of these fields, not just one but a variety of solutions to the

same problems have been developed, a reflection of the many different medical and social cultures historically grown on our continent. This treasure will be brought together, shared, and discussed once more in Madrid, presenting the sum of the experience of European medicine of the last 50 years, both in theory and practice.

A variety of solutions seems to be a contradiction to uniform standards which are a strong tendency throughout the medical world ...

Marcacci: We have to discern between a standard of quality and standard methods. Different circumstances may call for different methods of the same quality. But EFORT is the most vivid forum in the world to discuss different approaches, sometimes controversial but always according to the highest standards of scientific evaluation. Thus, exploiting European diversity does also yield higher common standards, since the comparison of approaches naturally leads to the shaping of

best practice models. And if a plurality of methods competes, there is always a greater chance for an optimal outcome than if only one single track is followed.

What may participants expect in detail?

Marcacci: This list could be endless. In sum, you will be presented the latest findings and advancements of the all the fields of our discipline at the highest possible scientific level. Four topics of general interest have been chosen for the plenary sessions: trauma care in Europe; metastasis disease; prevention and treatment of infections; and the building and the use of arthroplasty registers. Apart from those, each surgeon or traumatologist will find what he or she needs to improve his/her knowledge and skills: experts will be able to share opinions with their equals; young resident doctors can discuss their problems and needs with older, more experienced colleagues; generalists will be able to learn new methods

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► continued from previous page (Madrid) and technologies from the most advanced specialists; and young researchers will be offered special workshops to help them to create study designs in accordance with the principles of EBM, and much more. On top of this, one of the greatest attractions will doubtlessly be the chance to make contact with colleagues from all over Europe, and in fact, the whole world, since EFORT events have already sparked huge interest also in Asia, Africa and South America.

Except of diversity, what do you think attracts this amount of curiosity?

Marcacci: Another simple answer: EFORT has obligated itself to the highest standards of scientific evaluation. A lot of attention is paid to not only inform, but to inform correctly. One of the main messages of EFORT is: show us whatever you found, but on the

basis of evidence. We try to separate the wheat from the chaff and avoid presenting solutions and techniques which are not appropriately tried and proven.

As for your own field of expertise, what are the hot topics and big news?

Marcacci: As you know, my main personal experience is in joint and tissue reconstruction and high level sports medicine. And as a serious clinician and researcher, I'm in favour of evolution instead of revolution, meaning that advancements proceed step by step and usually not in sensational leaps. Therefore, my colleagues and I will not present anything zealous, but will concentrate instead on very strong and reliable information. One of the hottest topics will be new methods of regenerative treatments for damaged or worn-out cartilage. Instead of cell cultures, they work with artificial

tissues able to guide the formation of new tissue by the body's own adult stem cells. Here too, we must still be careful in our statements, but the data so far are very promising.

What is your personal message to your colleagues concerning EFORT 2010?

Marcacci: EFORT is Europe, and that means: all of us! We should establish Europe as the world's best and most innovative region in understanding and treating musculoskeletal lesions – for the reasons already mentioned. So come and get the most advanced update available in any field of orthopaedics or traumatology that you're involved in!

info For more information please visit the EFORT congress website: www.efort.org/madrid2010

Portrait about EPOS: European Pediatric Orthopaedic Society



EPOS, European Paediatric Orthopaedic Society, was founded when Europe was politically split. Despite the political situation due to the cold war, a very small group of colleagues decided courageously to found EPOS. The society has been created under the impetus of Professor Bensahel in March 1982. The founders decided, at its inception, that EPOS would be devoted to the entire geographic

European continent. During that time, many scientists in various fields were engaged in improving and strengthening this society.

During the last 30 years, technology has created new tools including: sonography, osteosynthesis, arthroscopy, certain spine surgery procedures, external fixation, and preventative measures. Paediatric orthopaedics has gained a strong legitimacy.

Today, many leaders have contributed to the scientific expansion of the society and our participation in EFORT is not only a privi-

lege, but also an obligation to increase the scientific role of Europe. EPOS and EFORT are engaged for the long-term; there are many things that we have to do. EPOS is ready to meet the challenge. Our responsibility concerns all children in situations that make them vulnerable throughout the world.

author Alain Dimeglio, EPOS Historian

EFORT – EPOS Instructional Course (IC) EPOS Educational Programme BAT, Traumatology

An essential part of the mission for EPOS is education and training in paediatric orthopaedics with an aim to advance the knowledge and competences of orthopaedic residents and trainees.

EPOS members have a professional responsibility to advance the knowledge in paediatric orthopaedics and to strengthen their collaboration based on mutual respect and equality with the worldwide community of paediatric orthopaedists

Hence, the first EFORT-EPOS Instructional Course in Children's Orthopaedics focused on traumatology was launched in Vienna. The primary aim was to improve knowledge in children's orthopaedics for general orthopaedic surgeons, particularly those at the beginning of their careers. The syllabus should contribute to knowledge-sharing and a further understanding of children's orthopaedics.

Orthopädisches Spital Speising in Vienna was chosen as a venue for the course because of its excellent facilities and geographical position. Nearby low-rate accommodations,

55 /night, were secured for the participants. The educational faculty represented highly recognized specialists in children's orthopaedics throughout Europe including: Manuel Cassiano Neves, Portugal; Jaroslaw Czubak,



Poland; Franz Grill, Austria; Yoram Hemo, Israel; Pierre Lascombes, France; Mark Paterson, United Kingdom; Annelie-Martina Weinberg, Austria; and Thomas Wirth, Germany. Lectures were followed by case presentations and panel discussion. Three workshops were offered by Smith & Nephew, Stryker and Orthofix. The course was held over three days,

starting Thursday October 8th 2009. Registration fee was 200 for residents, which included receiving all PowerPoint presentations on a USB drive. The course was highly rated amongst the participants (56) on a preformed evaluation form. The course was designated for a maximum of 18 hours of European external CME credits.

EPOS Educational Committee highly appreciated the professional support given by EFORT Central Office. A special thank you goes to Patrick Collet.

This Traumatology course in EPOS Educational Programme BAT will be followed by Basic courses in Children's orthopaedics week 41, October 2010 at Orthopädisches Spital Speising in Vienna. Furthermore advanced courses on specific topics will be launched. For further details please go to the EFORT Website and go to EPOS Website on a regular basis.

author Bjarne Møller-Madsen, Chairman EPOS Educational Committee (Europe)



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New and exciting formats are being launched and familiar ones improved with this congress cycle.



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