The First Croatian Low Back Pain Day

The First Croatian Low Back Pain Day was held on October 5, 2004 in Multimedia Center, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital, Zagreb, as part of the World Health Organization (WHO) Project entitled Decade of Bone and Joint Diseases. The meeting was organized by the Croatian National Committee on the Project, Croatian Medical Association, Croatian Society of Rheumatology, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital, Reference Center for Inflammatory Rheumatic Diseases of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia, and Croatian League Against Rheumatism.

The activities of The First Croatian Low Back Pain Day, led by Professor Zrinka Jajić, consisted of the Low Back Pain Symposium, presentation of the book Chronic Pelvic Pain in Women by Professor Ivo Jajić and coworkers, and activities of the Croatian League Against Rheumatism designed for patients.

During the opening ceremony, Professor Marko Pečina, member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia and president of the Croatian National Committee of the WHO project Decade of Bone and Joint Diseases, pointed to the significance of the musculoskeletal diseases in the society and to their ever growing incidence in Croatia as well as worldwide. Professor Jadranka Morović-Vergles presented current activities of the Croatian National Committee, Professor Božidar Ćurković, president of the Croatian Society of Rheumatology, warned all participants of the significance of low back pain, especially as it is one of the leading causes of absenteeism. Assist. Professor Radoslav Herman, head of Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital, expressed gratitude to the Croatian National Committee of the WHO Project for choosing our hospital to host the First Croatian Low Back Pain Day.

The Low Back Pain Symposium led by Professor Zrinka Jajić addressed the issue of inflammatory low back pain by an interdisciplinary approach, i.e. from the aspect of rheumatology, ophthalmology and gastroenterology. In her lecture on the latest achievements in spondyloarthritides (ankylosing spondylitis, psoriatic arthritis, reactive arthritis, entheropathic spondylitis), Professor Zrinka Jajić gave us an important message about the importance of early diagnosis of inflammatory low back pain. She also presented new treatment options for spondyloarthritides, including biologic therapies such as anti-tumor necrosis factor (TNF) therapy, which seems to be highly efficacious in these patients, even exceeding that recorded in rheumatoid arthritis, along with latest results from the main clinical researches relevant for it.

Professor Marko Duvnjak, head of the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, presented the issue of inflammatory bowel disease as a possible manifestation of
spondyloarthritides and his own experience with TNF-α blockers in their treatment.

Professor Zdravko Mandić, head of the Department of Ophthalmology and president of the Croatian Society of Ophthalmology, delivered a lecture on ocular manifestations in patients with inflammatory diseases of the spine.

Tomislav Nemčić, M.D., president of the Croatian League Against Rheumatism, gave a lecture on the League activities and active participation of patients in their treatment since the League foundation by Professor Ivo Jajić at the Department of Rheumatology, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Reference Center for Inflammatory Rheumatic Diseases, Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital.

The Symposium allowed our medicine to get closer to the use of TNF-α blockers in patients with spondyloarthritis, which have been shown to be very efficient in these patients according to the results of many clinical investigations.

Presentation of the book Chronic Pelvic Pain in Women by Professor Ivo Jajić and coworkers, published by Medicinska naklada, was led by Ms. Anda Račić, B.A. Re-viewers of this interesting book, the first of the kind in our medical literature, with a multidisciplinary approach to chronic pelvic pain in women, are Professor Krešimir Koržinek and Professor Vlastimir Kukura.

Guided by the Latin proverb, “De omni re sciés et qui-busdam alis”, Professor Ivo Jajić addressed the participants and stated that the textbook was the result of long and successful cooperation with our distinguished physicians, Professors Vida Demarin, Marko Duvnjak, Goran Grubišić and Zrinka Jajić; Ante Reljić, M.D., M.S.; Ivan Mikula, M.D., Ph.D.; Tajana Pavić, M.D.; and Fran Grubišić, M.D.

Activities of the Croatian League Against Rheumatism designed for patients consisted of lectures on clinical manifestations and therapeutic approach in patients with inflammatory low back pain and presentation of the League publishing activities on patient education. The lecturers were Simeon Grazio, M.D., Ph.D., and Fran Grubišić, M.D.

High quality lectures, large number of participants, wealthy contents of The First Croatian Low Back Pain Day as part of the WHO Project Decade of Bone and Joint Diseases, the media support and positive response from both the organizers and participants made it a successful meeting organized in accordance with the European League Against Rheumatism instructions.

The content of all activities presented during The First Croatian Low Back Pain Day is available at the Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital web site: www.kbsm.hr.

Zrinka Jajić