

ESTRO Multidisciplinary Teaching Course on Lung Cancer



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bers of the distinguished teaching faculty from various parts of Europe, the course was attended by 84 participants, a mix of radiation and medical oncologists, thoracic surgeons, radiologists, radiation physicists, radiographers and others from all over Europe, Asia, Australasia, America and South Africa. This course included intensive teaching sessions, and discussions and was an enlightening and enjoyable event run over three days.

On the first day we listened to lectures on 'Pitfalls in Imaging' by Professor Neuwirth and 'PET Use in Daily Practice' by Professor Dirk De Ruyscher, both of which were very interesting and provided a clear explanation of the anatomical and biological information gained with CT and PET. The key carry home message for the management of lung cancer was that CT and PET have complementary roles rather than one modality superseding the other. The limitations of PET due to altered uptake of FDG in post obstructive pneumonia, bronchoalveolar carcinoma and atelectasis were clearly explained. In another lecture Dr De Ruyscher outlined the role of stereotactic radiotherapy over conventional radiation in non-operable lung cancer, suggesting that stereotactic radiotherapy can safely be recommended as the standard of care for this subset of patients. Mr Kuzdzal, the eminent thoracic surgeon from Poland gave a very thorough account of the algorithm for mediastinal staging techniques. Mr Gonzalo Varela, another distinguished thoracic surgeon from Spain spoke about

comparable survival after anatomical segmentectomy and lobectomy. The importance of systemic nodal dissection was also nicely outlined and from the aspect of surgical management, this talk was very informative and much appreciated. Professor Paul Van Houtte's quiz about new TNM staging for lung cancer was a great group learning experience, establishing an instant rapport with all participants. Dr Enriqueta Felip from Spain explained the benefits of pre-operative chemotherapy for bulky stage II - III disease and also outlined the limitations of combined radiotherapy-chemotherapy in elderly patients with co-morbidities and post operative chemotherapy, both due to poor compliance. Every day after lectures there was dedicated time for lively case discussions, workshops for target outlining, which both served to consolidate our knowledge base. This was a compact and well-structured teaching course which will be very useful for evidence-based decision making in oncology practice. The course venue, directions to the course, food, accommodation and entertaining social evenings were thoughtfully planned and organised. All credit for this goes to the hard work put in by local organiser, Hana Stankusova, and Guy François from ESTRO. I would happily recommend this course to anyone with an interest in the management of lung cancer. ■

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Lung cancer is the second most common malignancy affecting the UK population and probably a problem of the same magnitude for other European Countries. Non small cell lung cancer accounts for about 80% of all the lung cancers and in the majority of cases due to late detection, lung cancer remains a challenging disease for physicians. Set against this background, the ESTRO multidisciplinary teaching course on lung cancer held in Prague with Dr Paul Van Houtte from Belgium as course director, was an excellent learning opportunity for the oncology community with an interest in this malignancy. Prague, known as the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Central Europe, and the ancient capital of Charles IV's Bohemian Kingdom, was a perfectly selected venue - the icing on a sumptuous cake. Besides the nine mem-