



Second National Conference on Interstitial Lung Diseases

Bucharest, 23-24 June

A doua Conferință Națională de Pneumopatii Interstițiale Difuze

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The Working Group for Interstitial Lung Diseases and Sarcoidosis of the Romanian Society of Pneumology organized its second national conference in Bucharest, excellently hosted by the Ramada Park complex.

The conference benefited from the presence of top experts in interstitial lung diseases (ILDs) from the country and abroad. We had again the great opportunity to have beside us prof. Athol Wells from Royal Brompton Hospital, London, prof. Ulrich Costabel from Essen, and prof. Martina Vasakova from Tomayer University, Prague. We are thankful to prof. Ioan Paul Stoicescu, member of the Romanian Medical Academy, for joining us at this event.

The two-day conference focused on the latest developments of the knowledge of interstitial lung diseases. The program was opened by a workshop dedicated to thoracic imaging in interstitial lung diseases, where Diana Manolescu (Timișoara) presented in an interactive manner the most prominent imaging features of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and other entities. She also referred to “tips and tricks” for finding diagnostic hints in the most difficult cases, and illustrated her presentation with numerous images.

Milena Man (from Cluj-Napoca) brought to discussion an interesting insight into the pathogenesis of IPF: the lung microbiome. Elena Danteș (Constanța) summarized the prognostic factors and evolution of idiopathic ILDs, Radu Crișan Dabija (Iași) discussed about the impact of errors in the diagnosis and long-term evolution of the patients, and Dragoș Bumbacea (Bucharest) reviewed the new developments related to acute exacerbations of IPF.

Another topic was the value of several investigations in the diagnosis and monitoring of ILDs: the thoracic ultrasound (Diana Manolescu), the lung function tests, and lung cryobiopsy (Mărioara Simon from Cluj-Napoca presented her own experience) followed by a presentation based on real-life cases (Ovidiu Fira Mlădinescu - Timișoara). The surgeons also participated: Cristian Paleru discussed about the indications, risks and pitfalls of surgical lung biopsy in ILD patients.

New insights into some of the major diseases were brought to attention by Martina Vasakova (Prague) – hypersensitivity pneumonitis; Ulrich Costabel – smoking-related ILDs, and Ionela Belaconi – ANCA-associated vasculitis.



Figure 1. Mrs. Aneta Șerbescu receiving her award



Figure 2. Prof. Athol Wells (left) and Prof. Ulrich Costabel participating in the case discussion

Various associations of ILDs with other diseases were discussed: the role of comorbidities in the pathogenesis of IPF (Daniel Trăilă, representing the Timișoara group), pulmonary hypertension in ILD patients (Miron Bogdan, from Bucharest), the association between IPF and emphysema (Ana Zaharie and Ruxandra Ulmeanu, from Bucharest), the association of ILDs and tuberculosis (Corina Borcea and Florin Mihălțan, from Bucharest).

A very interesting speech was given by Oana Arghir (Constanța), referring to ILDs in children, and the perspective of European projects to improve the knowledge in this field.

The involvement of the lung in systemic diseases is a hot topic, discussed for scleroderma (Daniel Trăilă), rheumatoid arthritis (Doina Tofolean, from Constanța), as well as the newly defined IPAF – interstitial pneumonia with autoimmune features (Irina Strâmbu, Bucharest, representing Katerina Antoniou, Heraklion, who unfortunately could not attend the conference).

The rare entities were in focus: pleuro-pulmonary fibroelastosis (Petronela Fildan, from Constanța), sirolimus treatment for lymphangiomyomatosis and the Romanian experience (Anca Macri, Bucharest), and pulmonary alveolar proteinosis and the whole lung lavage (Radu Stoica, Bucharest).

The advances in treatment were brought to discussion by Emanuela Tudorache and Cristian Oancea (Timișoara), talking about non-pharmacological treatments in ILDs, by Monica Pop, from Cluj-Napoca (immunomodulatory treatment in sarcoidosis), as well as by speeches sponsored by pharma companies: Ofev (Nintedanib), presented by Martina Vasakova, and Esbriet (pirfenidone), an interactive mini-symposium presented by Florin Mihălțan and Athol Wells (London).

Prof. Wells commented on the topic of the usefulness of multidisciplinary discussion for the diagnosis of ILDs, discussing its value and pitfalls.

The program was closed with a session dedicated to real-life approach to ILD diagnosis and management. Carmen Stroescu, Ștefan Leu, Ionela Erhan and Irina Strâmbu each presented a difficult ILD case, eliciting the participants' opinions and comments.

The surprise of the Conference was the prize awarded by the Working Group (a one-year subscription to the *Journal of the American Society of Cytopathology*) to Mrs. Aneta Șerbescu, for her contribution to the ILD diagnosis by implementing and developing the bronchoalveolar lavage technique in Romania. With this occasion, she confessed that she had just celebrated 50 years of activity at "Marius Nasta" Institute.

About 200 participants registered for the conference, among them many very young specialists, residents and young pneumologists, stressing on the attraction of the topic of ILDs and the increasing need for a better understanding of this complex domain, for the benefit of a better care for these patients.

The Ramada Park offered a perfect venue for the conference, and guests could also enjoy the proximity of the Herăstrău Park, in the beautiful June weather.

We thank to all our honorable speakers, to the participants and to pharma companies for their contribution to this successful high-level conference. ■