REPORT ON THE 13TH DANUBE INTERNATIONAL OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGICAL CONGRESS, 2–5 JULY 2014, ROMANIA

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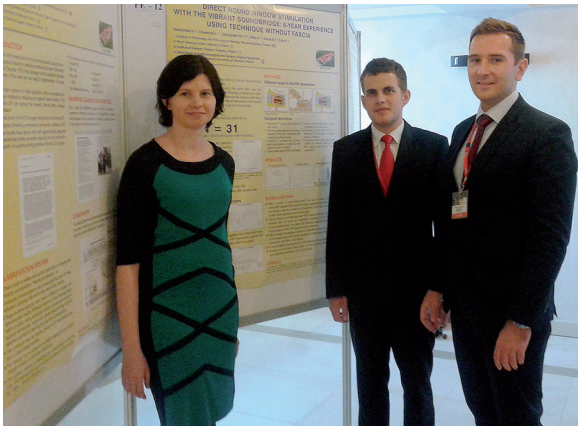
The 13th Danube International Otorhinolaryngological Congress, together with the ENT National Congress, was held in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, at the beginning of July. More than 800 attendees from all over the world had a great opportunity to share knowledge and experience. Over 40 sessions covering laryngology and audiology were held. Subjects included otology, otosurgery, implantable devices for hearing improvement, audiology, rhinology, rhinosurgery, endoscopic paranasal sinus surgery, surgical oncology, phonosurgery, obstructive sleep apnea syndrome, and diseases of the salivary glands.

Justin Shah, a world specialist in head and neck oncological surgery, gave a very interesting lecture on the role of the surgeon in the interdisciplinary team that treats patients with head or neck cancer. He discussed pitfalls that can occur during Gusset neck surgery. Mistakes here are especially important because they might hinder communication between specialists.

Another interesting lecture was given by Stefan Plontke who presented a multicenter study on sudden deafness. He showed that intratympanum steroid injections (250 mg per day for 5 days) can be very successful as a standard first step in steroid therapy. In case further treatment is needed, he suggested intracochlear steroids, which give much higher perilymphatic drug concentrations and better distribution.

Jan Casselman described the usefulness of new MRI techniques for assessing possible resumption of cholesteatoma after surgery. Use of non-echo-planar diffusion weighted imaging (non-EPI-DWI), with a later-computed apparent diffusion coefficient (ADC), is a very sensitive tool for differentiating cholesteatoma from other changes such as inflammation. After some further development, this technique may become a good alternative to so-called 'second look' surgeries.

A round table discussion focused on the sense of smell and the 'empty nose syndrome' was very inspiring. During discussion it was emphasized that excessive removal of turbinates not only disturbs the turbulent air flow and changes



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mucosal protective properties but can also weaken the sense of smell. The ends of the olfactory nerve are present not only in the ceiling but there are also ends of the trigeminal nerve in the middle nasal turbinate mucosa and the middle nasal passages. In addition, the reduced activity of autonomic fibers of the 5th nerve may affect the subjective feeling of impaired nasal patency, even in the absence of anatomical deformity of the nose.

The Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing was represented by P.H. Skarżynski, M. Rusiniak, M. Sosna, and B. Król who showed the results of a range of scientific and clinical projects run by the World Hearing Center. In total they gave five lectures and seven posters. The work by M. Rusiniak entitled "Auditory attention deficits in dyslexic children: simultaneous ERP-MRI examination of specific auditory therapy outcomes", was considered by the jury as the best presentation of the meeting. P.H. Skarżyński was invited to participate in a round table discussion devoted to revision surgery after stapedotomy.

The 13th Danube International Otorhinolaryngological Congress was a special opportunity for scientists and clinicians to exchange experiences. The meeting offered a way to review the newest work in world laryngology and to learn of the therapies applied by Romanian physicians.