Opening Ceremony Highlights

The Congress was opened last night by Master of Ceremony Professor Christoph Zielinski, from Medical University of Vienna, Austria, to a packed auditorium. Professor Zielinski welcomed everyone to his home city, declaring ESMO 2012 officially open. “Vienna is a city at the geographical cross roads of Europe that also bridges the different approaches to both cancer treatment and reimbursements. Our situation uniquely qualifies us to host a conference on cancer with participants from all over the world,” said Professor Zielinski.

ESMO, she added, is uniquely positioned to lead high-quality scientific and educational initiatives through its Congresses, OncologyPRO, Guidelines, and a full range of products and services designed for medical oncologists. Furthermore, ESMO has global influence and reach through international collaborations with oncology societies throughout the world, and has created strong alliances with patient organizations and advocacy groups. The latest statistics, showing that 25% of the Western European population gets cancer before the age of 75 years, and 12.5% die from it, underline the enormous toll of this devastating disease.

Elucidating the complex molecular architecture of cancers, said Professor Piccart, offers the promise of ‘precision medicine’ with improved selection of targeted therapies for individual patients. But the accumulation of massive amounts of data - including full genome, exome sequencing, DNA sequencing, RNA sequencing, and protein analysis, Professor Piccart made a plea for such data to be shared ‘efficiently’ between academia, government and industry. A revolution, she stressed, is needed to allow data sharing to occur much earlier. “We still have a long way to go before massive amounts of alterations can be linked to cancer biology and translated into a truly effective treatment strategy!”

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Vienna: 600 years of medicine

Welcome! This is the third time that Vienna has played host to the ESMO Congress, and whether you have had the pleasure of visiting this historic city or not, there is plenty to see and do. Vienna, capital of Austria, is Vienna – now and as yesterday – the major cultural and educational hub for the Magyar Renaissance to art Nouveau to the latest advancements. But you can be sure that both Vienna and Austria have a long medical history and also host some groundbreaking oncology research facilities.

Today’s Special Sessions for Young Oncologists

Don’t miss today’s Young Oncologist track sessions, all of which have been specifically designed to include educational content relevant to your daily practice and research activities.

Vienna – not just 'The Third Man'

Sightseeing

The city has been classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site, while adjacent districts are filled with beautiful old town palaces and landmarks buildings. Don’t be surprised if the locals are not very Viennese from a different perspective? Take a special formal tour around this magnificent city and find out more about The Tower of Belvedere or the Hofburg Imperial Palace. You can’t miss it.

A walk of culture

Did you know that Austro is one of the most interesting phenomena happening in the world right now? Austrian wines are exceptionally good and just get better with age. Try some local wines by visiting one of the well-established wine cellars in Vienna.

Feeling hungry? If you are the “Williamsburg” type, you can enjoy the Austro-American cuisine at the numerous tea houses downtown.

Shopping

There are many shops and markets in Vienna, from the famous grocery store ‘Meindl’ (http://www.steffl.at/?locale=en) to the luxury department store ‘Galerie Klimt’ (http://www.galerieklimt.com). Head to Graben/Kohlmarkt for the famous fashion boutiques, and to Naschmarkt for the food stalls and markets.

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OUT NOW: The latest ESMO Clinical Practice Guidelines

We are pleased to announce the release of our latest enhanced and revised set of ESMO clinical practice guidelines (CPG)!

So, why are Clinical Practice Guidelines so important? You will find that these guidelines help you identify the most effective and efficient care for your patient, and will enrich your skills as a provider in many important ways:

- Reaching and maintaining a high common standard of care for your patients is medical practice and helping clinicians to deliver the best possible treatment.
- Leveraging negotiations with politicians, administrators and reimbursement companies.
- Helping patients find information on their treatment options, and data for Patients available in multiple languages.

The ESMO CPAs are based on the findings of evidence-based medical research, and provide you with a clear set of recommendations to help clinical decision making and improve the quality of care and outcomes for your patients. They are not designed to replace extensive guidelines or review articles, rather, they describe common standards of care. In other words, they provide a prioritized approach to the right care at the right time for both clinicians and patients.

Each ESMO CPA includes information regarding evidence level (such as A, B, C), as well as diagnostic, treatment, and follow-up recommendations, treatment plans and follow-up. In addition, to ensure the ESMO CPA guidelines include the most up-to-date recommendations for the best standards of care in oncology, the ESMO Guidelines Working Group and ESMO local members review them on a regular basis.

This latest set of ESMO CPAs includes updates in the areas of breast cancer, gynecological cancer, gastrointestinal cancer, lung cancer, cutaneous cancer, hematologic malignancies, head and neck cancers, sarcomas and melanomas, rectal cancer, and supportive care. You can pick up your printed copies from the ESMO Booth in the Exposition Village, or visit http://www.esmo.org/guidelines/download to download a copy of the ESMO Pocket Guidelines CP by country.

If you’d like to learn more about the guidelines behind the ESMO CPAs, and gain practical guidance on how to best use them, you will not want to miss the ESMO Clinical Practice Guidelines seminar that ESMO is running. The case presentations and interactive discussions between colleagues and patients take place on Sunday 30th September in Hall A from 09.00 until 13.00.

New ‘first-in-man’ data to be presented at ESMO

This year’s ESMO Congress will provide a first glimpse of some new data which may prove to be of great clinical benefit in the future. Among these, six presentations will cover novel therapies with the Guides for Patients available – or download a copy from: www.esmo.org/pocket-guidelines.

Pick up your printed copy of the ESMO Pocket guidelines delivered directly to your smartphone.

ESMO gives members Entering the 21st century, communication, and market awareness and professional development is becoming more important than ever, as patients are becoming increasingly aware of treatment options. ESMO gives members the opportunity to gain access to the latest evidence-based guidelines, and to have the latest recommendations for the best standards of care in oncology.

The latest developments take that accessibility one step further.

Clever drugs for clever cancers

Placem makers are 100% effective and difficult to treat and are still associated with a poor prognosis, despite decades of research. A key driver behind this poor response is a lack of chemotherapy and targeted agents involved in this setting. It is thought to be the stroma, which acts as a mechanical barrier to stop drug penetration and that is the reason for many drug failures, particularly in solid tumors. New targeted molecular tools are needed.

Presentations at this year’s ESMO include the latest research findings in pancreatic cancer, some of the latest tools for integrating a gene of interest in advanced treatment in this field. Among these, Dr. Mihail Hopat from the Mayo Clinic, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA, will present findings from an open-label, multi-center study evaluating the efficacy and safety of adding stav-322 to gemcitabine in patients with previously untreated, advanced pancreatic cancer. In this 3-arm study, the efficacy and safety of two different doses of stav-322 in combination with gemcitabine was compared with gemcitabine alone. Key subgroups, including progression-free survival and overall survival, will be presented by Dr. Borad in his presentation, which will take place at 10:15 today.

Session Info: Therapeutic Breakthroughs

Presenters: Nir Released, M.D., MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas, USA; Gil Perez-Ordonez, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York, USA; David Ries, M.D., Ph.D., Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York, USA; Daniel G. Reitman, M.D., Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia, USA; Andrew H. Berdon, M.D., Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York, USA; and Christopher S. Rose, M.D., Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, New York, USA.

ESMO Pocket guidelines delivered directly to your smart phone

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ESMO-ADCC Joint symposium: Staging the clinical trial of the future

9:15 – 11:00

ESMO-ASCO Joint symposium: Breast Cancer: Opening new doors

11:15 – 13:00

ESMO-DT-ITC-ECOCOM-UC-MSK Cancer Forum: Innovation and widely funded research: a new global model

11:15 – 13:00

ESMO-JMO-ESMO Joint symposium: Recent advances in the treatment of GI tract and liver cancer in the 21st and Japan

14:00 – 15:30

ESMO-GSK Joint symposium: Targeted therapies: Preclinical approaches and their clinical translation

9:15 – 11:00

ESMO-GSK-EPS GlaxoSmithKline for personalized cancer treatment

14:15 – 15:45

ESMO-RAS-REACT Joint symposium: Integration between medical oncology and surgical care: Two arms of the same coin

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In view of an audience of top international oncology professionals including 5,720 delegates, 1,417 exhibitors, 143 international presentations, 377 posters, 113 Short Oral communications, 2,192 attendees, 1,364 attendees from 116 countries and 22,458 abstracts presented, Professor Ian Tuxen, from Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto, Canada, presented the 2012 ESMO Award for his contribution to clinical research in metastatic prostate cancer. Professor Jan van der Velden, from Utrecht University, The Netherlands, presented the 2012 ESMO President’s Award for his significant efforts in international cancer research and recognition of the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) and his contributions to ESMO and National Congresses and associated workshops.

‘ESMO 2012 will present emerging strategies to treat cancer, new targeted agents for small cell lung cancer, new agents for prostate cancer and new treatment options for a variety of conditions.’

The ceremony by Professor Piccoli also provided an overview of the great scientist in his field, highlighting his contributions to medical oncology and international medicine. Among his many achievements, Professor Piccoli played a crucial role in the first human trials of docetaxel (now known and marketed as Taxotere® in the US and Europe), and made a significant contribution towards the development of chemotherapies for metastatic colorectal cancer and also towards the development of new treatments for prostate cancer.

In front of such contributions to the field, Professor Piccoli announced that ESMO had created a translational research laboratory in his honor, Professor Piccoli also thanked family members of Professor Piccoli, presente in Vienna, including daughter, Catherine, who received the Flower of the Night award in honor of her father’s work. ESMO Scientific Chair, Professor Josep Tabernero, from Vall d’Hebron University Hospital, Barcelona, Spain, gave the Scientific Address that included a special message on behalf of the European medical research community with the creation of ESMO, ESMO, RICARD and U517.

Don’t miss the ESMO booth stand no.29
ESMO Young Oncologist Track: Overview of sessions

The Young Oncologist’s Track at ESMO 2012 promises to be the best ever before us. It comprises talks that are especially designed to help students and young researchers in their early career at symposia and workshops, and to provide networking opportunities with other young oncolgists.

The track of gold is a steady platform today for the Master Class on clinical trial development and the Visualak trial on cancer development. However, there’s still plenty to come in tonight!

Starting this morning, breakfast sessions are being held, covering important topics such as how to make an impact on clinical practice in early stages of your career, how to plan and conduct a successful research fellowship abroad, and how to be a great reviewer. Other highlights include a special session on methodology, by Professor Martin Gore from The Royal Marsden Foundation, London, covering the presentation and reporting of clinical trial findings. The aim of the Young Oncologist Activity is to provide opportunities for students to present their work in a supportive environment.

To add to the program input, the Young Oncological Career Committee have helped contribute a summary version of issues encountered in the use of therapeutic intervention and methodology for a wide range of clinical trial designs from across the world. The Young Oncologist Activity is an essential part of our educational program.

Note: both patients and medical professionals can gain something from this activity. As medical professionals we need to learn how to listen to patients and listen to patient groups. As patients we need to learn how to understand the expectations of our health care providers. As a result, we must ensure that our interactions with patients are enriching. In this context we must learn to face the challenges and difficulties of our everyday practice.

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ESMO Congresses in Vienna hot topics then and now!

This is the third time that Vienna has hosted the ESMO Congress, with previous congresses taking place in 1996 and 1998. It’s interesting to look back at topics that were hot in previous years as it provides great testimony to the vast amount of progress made in oncology as a result of the collective translational and clinical research we have undertaken over the past 20 years.

In 1998, data reported at the ESMO Congress included further attempts to fully characterize the genetic alterations associated with BRCA1 breast cancer following the first identification of this breast cancer-associated gene in 1995. This included a presentation by Dr. T. Goloubeva from the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, on the first documented polymorphism of the anti-proliferative protein encoding gene, prohibitin (PHB). PHB polymorphisms were subsequently associated with breast cancer risk.

In 1999, the first identification of the EGFR inhibitor, cetuximab, to irinotecan improved both response rate and disease stabilization in patients with EGFR-expressing, chemorefractory non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). This was the first report of an anti-EGFR monoclonal antibody, and the first demonstration of a molecularly targeted therapy for NSCLC.

In 2000, data presented at the ESMO Congress showed that the addition of the EGFR inhibitor, cetuximab, to irinotecan improved both response rate and disease stabilization in patients with EGFR-expressing, chemotherapy-resistant colorectal cancer. In recent years, new efforts have focused on refining the use of these agents, with a view to moving towards a tailored approach to therapy. Indeed, this is reflected in the ESMO 2012 Congress program, which includes various presentations reporting the efficacy of targeted agents such as erlotinib and cetuximab in specific patient populations. In addition, the efficacy and safety of various novel therapies with novel molecular targets will also be presented.

Finally, data from earlier ESMO meetings have shown that chemotherapeutics could be given to the same agent in the same patient but with limited success. However, since then, therapeutic targets have been identified in melanoma, and today biological agents lead the way in the management of this aggressive type of cancer. Indeed, we now get the WBV 902, vemurafenib, as approved as monotherapy for the treatment of adult patients with BRAF V600E mutated melanoma. During this year’s ESMO Congress, we will learn more about the activity of next-generation targeted agents such as the combination of WBV 902 in patients with BRAF V600E mutated melanoma.

Experience meets youth in cancer development

Last night the Vesalius Talks, provided young oncologists with valuable insights into cancer progression.

Molecular answers and targets on the horizon for the treatment of GU malignancies

ESMO Young Oncologist’s Committee, from the Vesalius Institute and Monday mornings of the findings of the International Collaborative Project

Young Oncologists in Vienna

ESMO Young Oncologists’ Committee, from the Vesalius Institute and Monday mornings of the findings of the International Collaborative Project
Targeted therapy in oncology: A key player in the move towards personalized medicine

The era of targeted therapy has long since been born out of a need to refine how we treat the myriad landscape of cancer therapy that we once hoped it would simplify. As we evolve the evidence, the patients may benefit even further as our acquisition of these agents based on the re-identification of specific vulnerabilities or presence of genetic alterations that make these agents particularly effective.

Over the past decade, there has been an enormous amount of research focused on improving our understanding of the underlying genetic alterations and key molecular pathways driving the development of cancer. Findings which are helping us to better identify which patients will benefit from a given targeted therapy and allow us to move towards a personalized therapeutic approach. This ever-growing knowledge base has also led to the identification of more molecular targets and the subsequent development of new targeted agents that may shape the future of cancer.

How to use ESMO, some of the latest translational and clinical research will be presented and discussed by leading experts in the field. Below is a summary of some of the most exciting presentations that we hear at this year's event and beyond.

For further details on these and other presentations, please visit our full ESMO Congress planner and abstract book.

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What does tumor shrinkage look like?

Find out in hall X, booth X130