



Newsletter of the International Thymic Malignancy Interest Group

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Annual Meeting: Torino, Italy by Dr. Robert Korst

The 8th Annual ITMIG Scientific Meeting was held in Torino, Italy on September 21 – 23, 2017. Keeping with the standard format, Thursday, September 21 was dedicated to face-to-face meetings of all the ITMIG committees and subcommittees. Although these committees meet via teleconference throughout the year, meeting face-to-face allows ITMIG members to accomplish much more and welcomes all interested parties to contribute.



The 2017 Scientific Meeting formally kicked off on Friday, September 22 with a mixture of invited experts and peer-reviewed oral abstract presentations. Presentations were grouped thematically into sessions that included the history of thymic surgery, radiation therapy and thymic carcinoid tumors. The eight abstract presentations were grouped into clinical and basic science themes, highlighted by a presentation of the final TCGA results that will be published in the journal *Cancer Cell* in the near future. In

addition to the oral abstract presentations, additional abstracts were presented in poster format. All agreed that the quality of abstracts and science being conducted in the realm of thymic tumors continues to increase with every passing year. Evening activities on Friday

were headlined by a networking dinner at a local classic northern Italian restaurant.



The program on Saturday, September 23 began with two more abstract presentations focused on translational science and surgery. Delegates heard about new potential biomarkers for thymic tumors as well as the latest in minimally invasive surgical techniques. Two more invited expert sessions were



also presented on Saturday dealing with immunotherapy, targeted therapies and multimodality approaches to locally advanced tumors. Finally, a lively “tumor board” session was also conducted with an abundance of complex and interesting cases presented to expert panels. The meeting formally adjourned after the presentation of awards for the best abstracts and travel awards.

Annual Meeting: 2018

We are pleased to announce the 2018 Annual Meeting will be held in Korea in conjunction with the Korean Society of Cardiothoracic Surgery on Oct 25-27. This will be their 50th meeting and we are honored to be included. More information to come.

2017 ITMIG Officer Election Results

President: Edith Marom

Edith Marom is an internationally recognized Thoracic Radiologist working in Israel as well as retaining a position as Professor of Radiology at MD Anderson Cancer Center. She has been very engaged in many ITMIG initiatives since the beginning, among them chairing the Education Committee. She has also played a major role in engaging new members and promoting visibility of ITMIG outside of our membership. Because of her broad and long-standing engagement in ITMIG she has in-depth insight into ITMIG activities and goals. Her enthusiasm, boundless energy and ability to get things over the finish line are an asset for the ITMIG organization.

Vice President: Andreas Rimner

Andreas Rimner is a Radiation Oncologist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He has been active in many ITMIG activities since the beginning, including chair of the Thymic Carcinoma Committee, the TNM staging project and the ITMIG Tumor Board. He is an author on many ITMIG papers that have contributed to advancing the science of thymic malignancy management. He has always been engaged and his preparedness at conference calls and meetings definitely helps to move things forward.

Secretary: Alan Kirk

Alan Kirk is a Consultant Thoracic Surgeon at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. One of the busiest thoracic centers in the UK. He has been an enthusiastic supporter of ITMIG and has volunteered to contribute in many ways including hosting the 2017 Annual Meeting and the Steering Committee. He is a current councilor on the Steering Committee and thus he’s been engaged in all current initiatives. He has experience in organizing and leading many regional and national projects.

Treasurer: Josh Sonett

Josh Sonett is the Chief of Thoracic Surgery at Columbia University in New York. He has a longstanding interest in mediastinal disease and myasthenia gravis and has supported ITMIG since its inception in 2010. He is experienced at fundraising and has specifically volunteered to devote his energy and skills to help with ITMIG fundraising. He has also been engaged in the MG community and was a leader in the randomized study of thymectomy for MG.

2017 Fundraising Gala, New York City

The second annual ITMIG Fundraising Gala was held at the Manhattan Penthouse in NYC on Thursday evening, November 9, 2017. The evening brought patients, family, friends and doctors together to celebrate patients and the accomplishments of the organization. The event was a success raising nearly \$13,000 from the tickets, tributes, raffle items and generous donations.

The ITMIG Fundraising Gala is a major source of income for ITMIG, and as such, allows ITMIG physicians and scientists to continue to perform research aimed at guiding clinical care of patients with thymic malignancies. In addition, it is truly a fun-filled evening in New York City. ITMIG had obtained a room block at a nearby hotel at a discounted rate for those who wished to stay overnight or enjoy a long weekend in the city.

First Research Study Published from the ITMIG Prospective Database by Dr. Robert Korst

The first research study utilizing the ITMIG prospective database has been accepted for publication in *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*. This study, entitled “Positron Emission Tomography in Thymic Tumors: Analysis Using a Prospective, Research Database” evaluated the role of PET scanning in the workup and management of patients with thymic malignancies and is based on data from over 150 patients from all over the world. Given the large amount of rigorously collected prospective data, this study sets the standard for the use of this imaging modality for patients with thymic tumors.

Briefly, PET had the ability to noninvasively predict both WHO histologic type as well as pathological Masaoka-Koga stage in this large cohort of patients. The implications of these results are that PET may be used to help predict more aggressive tumors prior to surgical resection, allowing for the administration of other therapies prior to attempted resection. In addition, it appears that PET has little role in the management of patients with easily resectable, early stage tumors.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Prospective Database Research Committee

by Dr. James Huang

The ITMIG Prospective Database has now been up and running for over 5 years, and has collected data from over 1200 patients with thymic malignancies worldwide. This is a very detailed, online data repository based at Purdue University (www.ccehub.org). The database was recently expanded to have the ability to house source documentation as well as imaging studies and pathology images. ITMIG feels that this recent upgrade enhances the database quality and accuracy by providing access to source documents to verify the data. In addition, a Prospective Database Manager, Valentina Marchese is now working with Ann Christine Catlin at Purdue University to help enhance the completeness and accuracy of the database in order to prepare for the initiation of research projects. Questions about the ITMIG Prospective Database and how to get involved in entering patient data can be directed to Ann Christine (acc@purdue.edu).

Given that the database is now five years old, ITMIG will begin to solicit proposals for research projects from members in the near future. Since thymic tumors can recur and cause mortality many years after initial treatment, projects based on tumor recurrence and mortality are not ideal at this time. However, the database is very detailed and many other studies and queries will be able to be performed; such as the PET study described above. In addition to added detail, the ITMIG Prospective Database differs from the ITMIG Retrospective Database in that statistical analyses can be performed in real time within the database itself and data downloads are nearly effortless; allowing investigators to utilize their own statistical support to facilitate study performance. The ITMIG database usage committee, led by Jim Huang, will be outlining plans for the use of the database in the near future.

Research and Infrastructure Committee by Anja Roden

Our committee has monthly conference calls and you are invited to join us; they take place every 3rd Thursday of the month at 10AM EST. You will be updated on the latest projects and progress of the Research and Infrastructure Committees/Working Groups including Thymic Carcinoma Working Group, Biology/Tumor Bank Working Group, Research/Clinical Trials Working Group, Database Committee and the Outlier Analysis Working Group. One update for instance, thanks to Drs. Heather Wakelee and Sukhmani Padda, is that we now have an up-to-date clinical trials list that will be posted on our webpage for the benefit of our members. We will be updating this list regularly. If you become aware of a new clinical trial for patients with thymic epithelial tumors please contact Dr. Padda with the updates. For any questions regarding the committee's work please contact Anja Roden (roden.anja@mayo.edu).

Mediastinal Working Group by Anja Roden

We are still working on the Mediastinal Hemangioma Project. This study aims to identify specific radiologic features of mediastinal hemangiomas as these lesions are radiologically often thought to be thymomas or germ cell tumors. We will have a centralized radiology and pathology review for all cases. In addition, we will study the surgical approaches, clinical presentation, demographics and outcome of patients with these neoplasms. As these cases are extremely rare we would like to invite you to join our project. If you have any cases and would be interested in getting involved please contact Anja Roden (roden.anja@mayo.edu).