

# Meeting highlights worldwide collaboration in eye surgery

By Helen Smith (Executive Director Eye Surgery Foundation) & Yvonne Fletcher

More than 5,000 ophthalmologists, nurses and technicians from more than 50 countries attended the European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons XXIV Congress in London, held at the Science Museum and the ExCel Centre in Docklands.

The Ridley Medal Lecture was delivered by Dr Peter Barry from Dublin, on the results of the ESCRS Endophthalmitis study that examined antibiotic prophylaxis amongst 16,000 patients over three years, across 24 centres in nine countries. In the double-blind study, patients were divided into four matched groups: Placebo or antibiotic drops pre-operatively, with or without intra cameral (i.e. anterior chamber) antibiotic injection. The antibiotic used was cefuroxime. Results showed a five-fold decrease in suspected and proven endophthalmitis following intra cameral antibiotic injection at the end of the procedure. Cefuroxime was effective against Staph and Strep organisms, cheap and safe (while vancomycin and fourth generation cephalones were considered best for treatment of proven endophthalmitis).

A spirit of collaboration and co-operation was evident amongst those involved in many of the presentations, highlighted by six consecutive presentations on the pilot national electronic cataract surgery audit. This audit is still in the early stages – over 55,000 cases from 19 hospitals to date – examining operative and post operative complications, dropped nuclei, endophthalmitis and risk stratification for posterior capsule rupture and vitreous loss. The experience of the surgeon involved was a common risk factor for complications in all areas.

Dr Ng's presentation on *Trends in Cataract Surgery in Western Australia* confirmed the findings of the ESCRS Endophthalmitis study and detailed how 80% of all cataract surgery between 1980 and 2001 in WA was performed as day surgery.

Live surgery presentations via satellite included implantation of an ICare Lens, an anterior chamber lens placed in front of the iris without claw fixation but 'feet' that sits in the angle instead. No peripheral iridectomy is needed, there is no pupil distortion and the lens is inserted through a 3.2 mm incision.

Many presentations were given on various aspects of laser equipment and treatment. The Custom Vis Solid Laser was pertinent to the Eye Surgery Foundation and interesting comments around this equipment included the significantly higher transmission through BSS and normal saline than a 913 nm spot laser (common for most gas lasers), which minimises heating of the cornea.

A talk by Dr Bisantis from Italy looked at the effects of Ginkgo biloba on corneal subepithelial nerve regeneration after PRK. Patients receiving post-operative eye drops that included Ginkgo biloba had much better nerve fibre regeneration at six months post-operative and improved nerve density at one year post-operative, compared to patients who did not receive Ginkgo biloba drops.

There was much debate around the implantation of different refractive lenses in the same patient – whether mixing lenses gave a better overall visual outcome or not. No consensus was reached on this issue but there was consensus over the importance of patient counselling and realistic expectations.



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