

ESOP Masterclass report

The first part of the second series of Masterclasses in Oncology Pharmacy entitled *Preparation of antineoplastic drugs* took place in Prague, Czech Republic, at the beginning of December 2008.

This is the course organised by the ESOP that was first held in Denmark in 2007. In 2008 it was headed by Irena Netíková, Chairman of the Oncology Pharmacy Working Group in the Czech Republic. Organisational support was provided by Aesculap Academy of B Braun Medical.

A total of 38 participants from 14 European countries and one non-European country took part in the course. These pharmacists

Figure 1: Klaus Meier addressing the course



Professor Per Hartvig-Honoré, Eva Honoré, Robert Terkola, Ludek Bláha, Ewelina Korczowska and Professor Alain Astier also contributed to the course.

work mostly in central departments of cytostatics preparation or as clinical oncology pharmacists in hospital wards. The Czech Republic was represented by seven participants. The course took the form of lectures, seminars and workshops on current and much debated themes in the field of oncology pharmacy, such as quality standards in oncology pharmacy, contamination by cytotoxic drugs, organisation and building of a cytotoxic preparation unit, the effect of cytotoxic drugs on personnel health, good manufacturing practice, spill management, clean working procedures, devices for cytotoxic preparation, stability of prepared doses of cytotoxic drugs and information sources, etc. (see Figure 1).

A representative of B Braun Medical presented information about the CytoCare robotic system to participants. This system can prepare cytostatic drugs under aseptic conditions and with maximum safety for workers.

A good time was had by all, especially at the social evening whose theme matched the date of the course – St Nicolas.

Author

Irena Netíková, PharmD, PhD
Specialist in Clinical and Oncology Pharmacy
Hospital Pharmacy of GTH
32 Karlovo nám
CZ-12800 Prague, Czech Republic
irena.netikova@seznam.cz

News Flash

New bone loss prevention agent

The *New England Journal of Medicine* has published two randomised placebo-controlled studies of denosumab, a novel human monoclonal antibody, for the treatment and prevention of postmenopausal osteoporosis and for the treatment and prevention of bone loss in men receiving androgen-deprivation therapy for prostate cancer.

The first study showed that denosumab given subcutaneously twice yearly for 36 months was associated with a reduction in the risk of fractures in postmenopausal women with osteoporosis. The second study found that denosumab increased bone mineral density at the lumbar spine, femoral neck and hip, and reduced

the incidence of new vertebral fractures among men receiving androgen-deprivation therapy for non-metastatic prostate cancer; 1,468 patients were randomised to 60 mg denosumab subcutaneously every six months or placebo (734 patients in each group).

The FDA has identified safety issues and may require a risk mitigation strategy before approving the agent. Nevertheless, Amgen has also submitted marketing applications for denosumab for prostate and breast cancer bone loss in Australia, Canada, the EU and Switzerland.

Published online. *N Engl J Med.* 2009;361. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa0809003.

EJOP – Call for papers

The main objectives of the *European Journal of Oncology Pharmacy* (EJOP) are providing information on current developments in oncology treatment, sharing practice related experiences as well as offering an educational platform via conference/seminar reports to practising oncology pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. The editorial content covers scientific, clinical, therapeutic, economic and social aspects. Prospective authors are welcome and invited to share their original knowledge and professional insight by submitting papers concerning drug developments, safety practices in handling cytotoxics and breakthroughs in oncology treatment along with practice guidelines and educational topics which fall within the scope of oncology pharmacy practice. Manuscripts must be submitted in English, the journal offers English support to the manuscript content. The EJOP 'Guidance for Authors' can be found on the website (www.ejop.eu), where the journal is freely available in PDF format. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas for manuscripts with us at editorial@ejop.eu.