

Current issues in phlebology

VI Ukraine International Congress

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On 4-6 July 2024 the 6th International Congress "Current Issues in Phlebology" was held in Yaremche (Carpathian region, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine).

Congress attended 44 speakers from 9 countries: Ukraine, USA, Poland, Italy, Germany, Spain, France, Brazil and Sri Lanka. Due to Russia's military invasion of Ukraine for security purposes, foreign speakers took part in the congress online. More than 200 participants attended offline: six sessions were held on July 4th and 5th, and complex clinical cases in phlebology practice were discussed in a separate session on July 6th. Workshops and 3 satellite meetings were also held as part of the congress program (two devoted to venous thromboembolism and one to chronic venous diseases).

Greetings from the officials of the Ivano-Frankivsk region, as well as the speech of the President of the European Society for Vascular Surgery prof. Sebastian Debus (Germany) opened the Congress.

First session: Current Trends in the Development of International Phlebology

Lowell Kabnick (USA) in his presentation talked about the gold standard and new superficial venous devices: despite the increasing number of interventions using non-thermal ablation, EVLA and RFA still remain the "gold standard" for the elimination of superficial refluxes. According to the results of the trials, new devices were also presented: InVera, Solutio, Amsel Secure II Clamp, HIFU. The possibility of performing total EVLA without mini phlebectomy (T.E.L.) was presented by Michael Prüfer (France), as well as Matthias Tenholt (Germany) - in the form of supplementing laser ablation with sclerotherapy the day after ablation (T.E.L.O.S.). In both presentations, the high efficiency, safety and cosmetic results of the proposed approaches to the treatment of patients with CVD were demonstrated. Enric Roche (Spain) reported on the influence of the method of foam preparation on the results of sclerotherapy: it was shown that in the case of using automated foam preparation (VARIXIO, VB) devices a homogeneous and more stable foam is formed and with this

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approach, it is possible to obtain results of superficial vein occlusion close to that of laser ablation.

"How and when to treat varicose veins after superficial vein thrombosis – results from the German insights registry" – presentation by Thomas Noppeney (Germany), showed approaches to treatment tactics for patients with superficial vein thrombosis throughout the country. Nalaka Gunawansa (Sri Lanka) spoke about the need to consider individual manifestations of varicose veins when choosing a method of thermal ablation (Laser or RFA). He presented results and justified the choice of thermal ablation methods.

Second Session: Controversial Issues of Phlebology

Serhii Shchukin (Ukraine) spoke about the possibility of using endovenous ablation (thermal or chemical) in patients with superficial vein thrombosis: he presented his experience of performing ablation of non-thrombotic venous trunks earlier than is generally accepted. Oksana Ryabinska (Ukraine) presented the results of a comprehensive study "Antegrade reflux in the Giacomini vein: causes and treatment tactics", special attention was paid to the need for detailed preoperative ultrasound examination of venous blood flow in both superficial and deep veins of the limb and pelvis.

Cases of saphenous aneurysms near the saphenofemoral junction are not so rare in phlebology practice. Vasyl Shaprynskyi (Ukraine) spoke about the choice of treatment method (thermal ablation or open surgery) based on the results of his study. Long-term results (up to 5 years) of using a new device (SVARMED, Ukraine) for thermal ablation (endovenous welding) were presented by Vladyslav Horbovets (Ukraine). This method differs in its technical characteristics from the RFA, due to the lower temperature it creates a lower risk of damage to the surrounding tissues, the procedure is more cost-effective, and the occlusion results are identical to RFA and EVLA.

The problem of diagnosis and effective treatment of patients with phlebolympheidema was presented in the speech of Vicki Ralph (USA): it was emphasized that

successful treatment of patients with severe forms of phlebolymphelema is possible only with close and active cooperation between phlebologists and physiotherapists.

The panel discussion "Varicose veins in feet: benefits of each treatment method" was quite interesting, Ivan Gudz (Ukraine) acted as moderator: he presented the relevance of the problem, the anatomical features of the vascular and nervous architecture of the foot, modern treatment options and presented world experts, who participated in a discussion on the use of different approaches to the treatment of patients with feet varicose veins.

Aleksandra Jaworucka-Kaczorowska (Poland) presented her own experience of using sclerotherapy in this category of patients: in 682 patients, various types of sclerosants and procedures were used, despite the predominant clinical improvement, 96.04% (655/682 patients) said they would have this procedure again; possible complications and possibilities of their prevention were also discussed. In his presentation, Stefano Ricci (Italy) presented his own experience of using ambulatory mini-phlebectomy in the foot: anatomical features of the venous system of the foot, the causes of varicose veins, and also detailed the technical points of performing a safe mini-phlebectomy, possible risks and complications were discussed. The results of using EVLA on varicose veins of the foot were presented by Luiz Fernando Lima Albernaz (Brazil): he shared his 10-year experience of using laser ablation on the foot in 4,000 patients. The speaker analyzed the possible complications and also compared the results of laser ablation versus mini-phlebectomy in 270 patients, and concluded that laser ablation is a reasonable alternative to mini-phlebectomy.

Third Session: Special Problems of Phlebology

Features of the endovenous methods choice in elderly patients and patients with concomitant pathology were presented in the speech of Ruslan Staschuk (Ukraine): the advantages and possible risks of using both thermal and chemical (glue, foam) ablation. In another presentation, based on his long-term observation, the reasons for the recurrence of varicose veins after EVLA were analyzed: the importance of both the technical component of the procedure and the peculiarities of the morphological changes of superficial veins, as well as the role of perforator veins reflux was emphasized by Yury Samoiluk (Ukraine).

It should also be noted a significant number of presentations were devoted to the study of the pathogenesis and effective complex treatment of post-thrombotic syndrome (Sviatoslav Kostiv, Ukraine), as well as the possibilities of its endovascular correction (Anton Orlov, Ukraine). Several speeches related to venous ulcers: pathogenesis (Laryssa Chernukha, Ukraine), their differential diagnosis (Vasyl Shaprynskyi, Ukraine) and

treatment tactics in case of mixed ulcers (Serhii Karpeniuk, Ukraine). Within this session, satellite symposia were also held on the use of phlebotrophic drugs in the conservative treatment of patients with CVD.

Fourth session: Venous Thromboembolism is One of the Unsolved Problems of Modern Medicine

Given the large number of injuries to the lower extremities during the war between Russia and Ukraine, the congress presented the features of the clinic and treatment of deep vein thrombosis of the extremities and pelvis due to combat trauma (Oleh Skupyy, Ukraine), as well as the results of surgical treatment of combat damage to the deep veins of the neck, chest and abdomen on the example of the experience of one vascular surgical team in the nearest hospital to the frontline (Ihor Kobza, Ukraine).

Differences between the outcomes of combat trauma and injuries received in peacetime were emphasized. During the discussion, surgeons who participated in the treatment of the wounded soldiers also shared their experiences and recommendations for this complex problem. Within this session, a report was presented on the experience of surgical clinics regarding VTE prevention in urgent general surgery during the COVID-19 pandemic (Nazar Fedchyshyn, Myrgorodskyi Denys, Ukraine).

Fifth Session: Mini-Invasive and Conservative CVD Treatment

In this session, the results of endovenous procedures in CVD patients were presented. Wojciech Rybak (Poland) presented reasonable approaches to sclerotherapy or laser (also CLACS) selection in patients with C1: the importance of ultrasound diagnostics, individual treatment planning with possible repeated sessions, and the advantages of treatment methods were emphasized. Javier Perez Monreal (Spain) reported on the alternative technique of overlapping sclerotherapy in C1: he proposed a two-step treatment for C1 - first, the injection of polidocanol into telangiectasias or reticular veins, and then cryo-sclerotherapy using a sclerosant cooled to -40-60 °C in self-developed devices. This technique proved to be effective and more cost-effective than CLACS. The speech of Rustem Osmanov (Ukraine) was devoted to a critical analysis of the latest recommendations for sclerotherapy in CVD management. Oleksandr Sokolov (Ukraine) spoke about the possibilities of using various mini-invasive techniques (laser ablation, glue, foam) in patients with reflux through the popliteal fossa perforator vein, the speaker noted the need to choose an individual approach for each patient, taking into account the physician's own experience.

The problem of the AASV role in primary varicose veins and its recurrence after endovenous ablations was

highlighted in the presentation of Oleksandr Suzdalenko (Ukraine): his own experience of treating patients with primary reflux in AASV was given and results were compared with the data of the recently published SYNCHRONOUS-Study.

Sixth Session: Separate Issues of Prevention and Treatment of the Thrombosis of Deep and Superficial Veins

The peculiarities of the left lower extremity and pelvis DVT treatment were discussed - Yuriy Hupalo (Ukraine) demonstrated his experience of endovascular treatment. The following three presentations related to the management of lower extremity superficial vein thrombosis: the pathogenesis of SVT and the latest recommendations of evidence-based medicine (Laryssa Chernukha, Ukraine), the validity of conservative or operative treatment in a specific patient with an assessment of possible risks and long-term results (Rostyslav Sabadosh, Viktor Pavlychenko, Ukraine).

The "final accord" of this session was the talk by Josef Caprini (USA) "Assessment of the risks of venous thromboembolism in outpatients after interventions for varicose veins": the careful assessment of individual risk factors in patients with varicose veins was emphasized, it was stated that there is a disconnect between evidence and execution as it relates to VTE prevention. Recent publications show that in varicose vein surgical treatment, one prophylactic dose of LMWH is usually not enough, in patients with a particularly high risk of VTE, DVT prophylaxis can be extended up to 30 days, and in some cases even longer.

Seventh Session: Consideration of Complex Clinical Cases in Phlebology Practice

At this session, 9 clinical cases related to combat vascular trauma, venous thromboembolism, recurrent varicose veins, venous ulcers, and venous malformations were presented. Discussions were held regarding the treatment tactics proposed by the speakers.



From left to right: Dr Serhii Shchukin, Dr Vasyl Shaprynskyi and Prof Ivan Gudz