



REPORT ON THE RHINOFORUM 2017 CONFERENCE, WARSAW (POLAND), 31 NOVEMBER – 2 DECEMBER 2017

Rafał CHMIELEWSKI

Military Institute of Aviation Medicine, Department of Otolaryngology, Warsaw, Poland

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Author's address: R. Chmielewski, Military Institute of Aviation Medicine, Department of Otolaryngology, Krasieńskiego 54/56 Street, 01-755 Warsaw, e-mail: rchmiele@wiml.waw.pl

For the 15th time Prof. Antoni Krzeski organized the annual “Festival of Polish Rhinology”, as he calls it – Rhinoforum 2017, formerly known as the Rhinological Forum.

It is an international conference, during which Polish ENT specialists and rhinologists have been meeting for years with an international group of experts in the field of diagnostics and treatment of the nose and sinuses diseases. This year's lecturers were specialists from Great Britain, Czech Republic, United States, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Portugal. As always, the intensive program included 3-day sessions – from Thursday, November 30th to Saturday, December 2nd.

Thursday's session was opened by Prof. Krzeski. At the autopsy table he performed a cadaver demonstration of endoscopic surgery of paranasal sinuses. The presentation was commented by Prof. Paweł Stręk from Kraków, and its partners were: Karl Storz Endoscope, CEMED Medical Education Centre as well as Luxmed Group. After the presentation, the participants shared their focus among parallel sessions. Practical workshops on the experiences of Prof. Philippe Eloy from Belgium in the treatment of inverted papilloma and individual approach to a patient with chronic sinusitis presented by Prof. Robert Kern from the United States.

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At the same time, there was a very interesting session conducted by dr Marcin Strabużyński, a family doctor and dr Eliza Brożek-Mądry, an otorhinolaryngologist, devoted to headaches. Within a time limited by the schedule, the lecturers managed to present the differential diagnosis of headaches of neurological origin – dr Izabela Domitrz, and the basics of conservative and invasive treatment performed by an experienced “pain specialist” anaesthesiologist – dr Małgorzata Malec-Milewska. In the second part of the session, an interdisciplinary discussion with the presentation of cases of patients with headache/face pain was conducted. Dr Strabużyński presented patients from his family medicine practice and their specificity, while dr Brożek-Mądry, presented patients from her practice as an ENT specialist. The main aim of the session was to provide listeners with knowledge on how to differentiate headaches related to sinuses from other types of headaches based on history, clinical examination and basic diagnostic methods.

Friday was opened by Prof. Krzeski who welcomed all participants, especially the national consultant for otorhinolaryngology – Prof. Henryk Skarzyński, who congratulated “Antoś” on his success in organizing the annual RhinoForum over the last 15 years, which contributed to the current level of rhinology development in Poland. The inaugural lecture of Prof. Huizing from the Netherlands attracted the attention of listeners interested in the eternal dilemma of nasal surgery – function versus form. Professor emphasized that one follows the other, but we should never sacrifice the function to improve the form. Most participants agreed. Subsequent lectures engaged participants in the subject of genetic background and biology of the chronic sinusitis – professors Philippe Eloy from Belgium and Robert C. Kern from the USA. Afterwards, a round table discussion was held on a very current topic of personalized diagnostics and treatment of chronic sinusitis. Cases of difficult patients presented by Prof. Kern and dr Brożek-Mądry, were discussed and debated by the panellists in the context of new reports from the literature on the research programmes of new drugs such as Omalizumab and Depilumab. These are modern drugs from the group of monoclonal antibodies aimed at disrupting immunological pathways activated in allergic diseases and chronic sinusitis. Unfortunately, I have not heard of any Polish centres conducting research on these drugs and having their own experience with them.

After a tasty lunch I participated in the session on sinuses moderated by Prof. Claire Hopkins with

a series of interesting lectures, among others, on the conservative treatment of sinus diseases, or pros and cons of repeated surgery of paranasal sinuses. In the next session held by the English team, Peter Andrews shared his experience in the surgical correction of perforation of the nasal septum, and James Tysome in the first attempts to treat Eustachian tube obstruction with balloon-plasty. Since Friday morning, parallel to the lectures described above, workshops on rhinoplasty under the guidance of dr Michał Krawczyński, a paediatric session, a session on the treatment of nosebleeds were held and lectures by our colleagues from the Czech Republic on their experiences in the surgery of the lacrimal canaliculi and orbit took place. For obvious reasons, I could not participate in them.

Saturday morning was opened by our colleagues from Great Britain and Egypt with lectures on treatment of complications of endoscopic sinus surgery and basics of endoscopic surgery of skull base. Then, the lead was taken by a team from Kraków under the direction of Prof. Lucyna Mastalerz and Prof. Paweł Stręk, who gave interesting lectures on allergological novelties in the field of rhinology and, which is becoming a tradition of RhinoForum, the topic of the postnasal drip. Prof. Radosław Śpiewak delivered an interesting presentation on various nasal contact sensitizers, i.e. type 4 hypersensitivity mechanisms, including nasal steroid drugs. During the discussion after the presentation I raised the issue of cross-reaction between various steroid preparations and possible hypersensitivity to the active substance itself vs. the medium or carrier of the drug. Dr Andrzej Dymek, presented his extensive experience in the diagnosis and treatment of laryngopharyngeal reflux, in particular with the diagnosis of pH in the throat by means of a special throat pH probe, which is a liquid-air probe, which means that it is able to read the pH value not only from saliva or gastric acid, but also from the patient’s respiratory air. The fact that dr Dymek, and his wife run their practice in a small centre in Strzelce Opolskie, and it is a unique feat in Poland, and that he published a textbook on laryngeal-pharyngeal reflux, the first complete description of this issue in the national literature, deserves special recognition. As for Saturday sessions, I was not able to participate in parallel lectures on the treatment of snoring and the treatment of lacrimal canaliculi congenital diseases in children.

In conclusion, I can say that this year’s RhinoForum surprised me and my colleagues from the Department of Otolaryngology of the Military In-

stitute of Aviation Medicine with a relatively large emphasis placed on the diagnosis and conservative treatment of diseases of paranasal sinuses. However, in my opinion, this is due to the fact that after a period of intensive development of endoscopic techniques in the treatment, we have reached a certain limit of possibilities that it gives. There is a growing group of patients with chronic diseases of sinuses, after two, three or even more surgeries that do not bring them relief, but only additional mutilation and suffering. These people

need new, individually tailored diagnostic and treatment methods to bring relief to their suffering noses. Regardless of the progress and changes taking place in the global and Polish rhinology, patients can be appeased knowing that the participants of RhinoForum 2017 "will celebrate their glory and share their pain", as one of the colleagues from Great Britain described it, which I think is an accurate description of our struggles in the field of rhinology.