



Education and hands-on practice for the benefit of patients
with venous disease

evf HOW 2019 – Education in Venous Disease

The 11th evf HOW will be held in Porto, Portugal

29 – 31 October 2020

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The first European Venous Forum Hands-on Workshop on Venous Disease (EVF HOW) was organized in 2010 in Larnaca, Cyprus. The format combines “state-of-the art” presentations providing up-to-date information of modern practical management of venous disease, illustrated by case management discussions, live demonstrations, and most importantly, hands-on instruction with training on modern procedures. For the last 10 years, this combination of learning instruction has been shown to be successful and was so again at the 10th EVF HOW, which took place in Jurmala, (Riga), Latvia on 17-19 October, 2019. Each Workshop usually has at least 80 participants. A faculty of more than 25 ensures an unusual low learner/instructor ratio (3:1). Also, this year, the impact on the learners was significant. Multiple choice questions tests performed before and after the meeting had a good response rate and the average correct result was substantially increased for the vast majority of the delegates. The Workshop would influence and change most learners’ clinical practice in the future.

This success could not have been sustained through the years without the support of dedicated faculty members and the strong commitment of industry partners. The format will be continuously refined as we develop the **11th EVF HOW**, which is planned to go for the first time to Portugal, in Porto on **29-31 October 2020**. Almost 1100 physicians, including the 10th Workshop and the satellite mini - EVF HOW in Georgia 2014, have now completed the course, so EVF HOW is step-by-step expanding knowledge of venous disease and its clinical management in Europe. As only a maximum of 100 participants are accepted on a “first come – first served” basis, we recommended you register early to ensure a place. Please contact Anne Taft, Administrative Director, European Venous Forum; tel/fax +44 (0)20 8575 7044; email admin@europeanvenousforum.org. More information is available at www.evfvip.com

The objectives of evf HOW

To educate, train and update learners (the delegates) in the current clinical management of patients with venous disease by close informal interaction with venous experts during lectures, case discussions, hands-on activities and 'meet the experts' in small groups.

At the end of this course the learner should be able to

1. identify venous disease in patients
2. apply appropriate venous investigations
3. construct a plan for management
4. understand different interventional procedures
5. successfully incorporate treatment of venous patients in his/her practice
6. realize when to refer a patient for expert care

evf HOW Format

The EVF HOW mission statement is, "**Education and hands-on practice for the benefit of patients with venous disease**". The goal is to provide understanding of modern practical management of venous disease and hands-on training of modern procedures. An integral partner in this effort are the providers of different devices, sclerosing agents, stockings, bandages, ulcer care materials, ultrasound machines etc. who provide an unrestricted grant to our organisation. The objectives of the EVF HOW are impossible to fulfil without this partnership. The instruction of learning has from the start been structured on a few principles, which are important for the success of the Workshop:

- the number of learners is limited to facilitate interaction between instructors and delegates and thus the faculty/learner ratio is high
- the hands-on sessions are truly hands-on for the delegates, as much as possible; in some learning stations interactive exchange with the experts is the key experience
- all learning sessions are informal in a relaxed setting to allow uninhibited communication between delegates, faculty members and industry representatives
- plenty of time is set aside for discussion with the greatest interaction occurring at the workshop stations
- the learners are encouraged to bring their own cases for presentation and discussion
- there is no exhibition or parallel activity.

The format of the EVF HOW in 2020 will be similar to previous years; including formal lectures, case discussions and interactive video demonstrations on different treatment techniques and duplex scanning, covering acute and chronic venous diseases. The focus will be on hands-on training on procedures and devices whenever feasible. Faculty members in collaboration with the industry experts will instruct at 20 workshop stations. The delegates will attend each

workshop station during 30 min in small groups (maximum 4-5 delegates), giving each participant time to try out devices, practice bandages etc.

Learning Enhanced by Associated Website

In 2013 the EVF HOW website was introduced. This is a web-based password-protected portfolio, where each learner participating in the EVF HOW has access to the presentations, important references and guidelines, case reports for discussion, videos of procedures supplementary information about the workshop stations and other study material. Access is available *for one year* after the Workshop. This gives the learners a possibility to go back and reinforce and enhance their learning experience. The response has been very positive from the learners and the website is increasingly used. Most learners used the website before the start of the Workshop and accessed it during the Workshop. Participants agreed that the website was a valuable supporting tool especially by giving access to the presentations on-line, having references and guidelines in pdf format available, and to be able to return to posted video material.

A Report from the 10th evf HOW 2019 in Jurmala (Riga), Latvia

The 9th EVF HOW took place at the Lielupe Hotel in Jurmala (Riga), Latvia, 17-19 October, 2019. This facility was excellent for our needs. Dr. Uldis Maurins and his local team had worked hard to make optimal local arrangements and provided excellent patients for the duplex ultrasound training. The primary reason for attendance by the majority of learners was to update overall knowledge about venous disease and its treatment. In an assessment after the course, the overwhelming majority of the delegates indicated that the course had fulfilled their educational goals and expected learning outcomes (97%). The didactic sessions were much appreciated and considered useful by more than 94% of delegates, for the different sessions. The learners felt the workshop stations achieved all or most of the stated goals at each station. Their over-all expectations were met in 92% and a vast majority of learners (96%) stated the information they learnt would be implemented in their practice, which is really promising!

More than half of the delegates were vascular surgeons (57%) (including some cardiovascular) followed by phlebologists (22%) and other specialties such as general surgery (7%), (interventional) radiology (8%), dermatology, cardiology and anaesthesiology. We welcomed learners from 28 different countries. The vast majority of learners came from Europe, with Latvia at the top representing 21% of all learners.

The Program of evf HOW 2019

The instruction at the 10th Hands-on Workshop on Venous Disease, 2019, was provided by an international faculty with 23 experts from Europe and the USA. They not only gave presentations, but also actively discussed the cases presented and were an integral part of the workshop, giving practical tips and tricks from their own experience. The clinical input by the faculty members balanced well the specific device information presented by the industry representatives in most stations. This year two stations were aimed at 'meeting and chatting with the expert', which resulted to be very successful stations.

Didactic presentations

The presentations spanned the following subjects:

- *Basic principles* of chronic venous disease; accuracy of tests; and classification and assessment of treatment outcome
- *Treatment of varicose veins* conservatively with drugs and compression; with invasive procedures such as saphenous ablation with laser, radiofrequency, foam sclerotherapy, pharmaco-mechanical, glue ablation and open surgery; in addition were techniques where preserving the saphenous vein were highlighted. Which treatment to choose for which patient, interventions for recurrent or residual varicose veins and pelvic congestion syndrome were also debated.
- *Guidelines* for prevention and treatment of venous thromboembolism (VTE) and superficial vein thrombosis (SVT).
- *Treatment of acute VTE* with traditional conservative measures, direct oral anticoagulants, catheter-directed thrombolysis and pharmaco-mechanical thrombectomy was described and outcome reported; the question how to avoid post-thrombotic syndrome was addressed as well.
- *Diagnosis and treatment of chronic venous insufficiency (C3 – C6)* using a sequential treatment plan was presented, focusing on management of venous ulcers in clinical practice, the use of compression, stenting for deep venous obstruction and the role of valve reconstruction, including some perspectives about artificial valves, and potential treatment modalities for femoral vein obstructive lesions.

A video was shown on duplex ultrasound scanning (DUS) of the deep venous system to demonstrate the optimal investigation of patients with suspicion of acute DVT and with chronic venous disease, later to be practiced during the DUS workshop stations.



Scientific Presentations



Discussions

Award for the Best Case Report

The case discussions continue to be a popular component of the meeting and allow for the subtleties of patient treatment to be brought out in the interactive discussion between the faculty and learners. A total of 15 cases were presented illustrating the previously given lectures: about superficial and pelvic venous incompetence, aneurysm formation at the junction after endovenous thermal ablation, acute iliofemoral DVT, chronic outflow obstruction, May Thurner, venous ulcer management and treatment of underlying superficial and/or deep venous problems, venous malformation, VTE prophylaxis, lymphoedema etc. To encourage the learners to bring their own cases, the participant having the best presentation received an award of EURO 500. This year the prize was awarded to *Dr. Erwin Spannagl* from London (UK) for his presentation about '*a 29-yr old woman presenting with a swollen leg*'. Each case was presented in stages and the moderator encouraged the faculty and learners to join in at all stages, which lead to lively discussions.

Hands-on and 'meet the expert' workshops

As previously emphasized, this component of the EVF HOW is the most important. The usefulness of the different devices for the treatment of venous disease and personal clinical tips and tricks were highlighted by the faculty member. Details about the function of the device or the method presented was explained by the industry expert, accompanying the tutor in the workshop station. Each learner trained hands-on, whenever possible, under expert supervision after a short demonstration.

In **Workshop 1** intermittent pneumatic compression of the lower extremities was demonstrated. In the next station delegates learned more about mechanochemical ablation with a recently introduced new device. Then saphenous radiofrequency ablation was practiced and discussed, while the 4th station focussed at the therapy chain for venous leg ulcers, consisting of debridement and compression.



Workshop 1

In **Workshop 2** our learners discovered the potential of veno-active drugs in phlebologic practice and received tips and tricks for radial laser ablation, meeting an expert in this field. Then they learned how to make good quality foam with sodium tetradecyl sulphate and were familiarized with Intravascular Ultrasound (IVUS) in a model, learning how to interpret IVUS images.



Workshop 2

In the first station of **Workshop 3** a venous stent was demonstrated and specific indications highlighted. Participants further discussed clinical cases about superficial venous problems, then moved to another foam sclerotherapy station, where polidocanol was used for foam preparation and injection of tiny spider veins was practiced. They ended this workshop discovering the possibilities of a mechanical thrombectomy device for patients with acute iliofemoral DVT



Workshop 3

In **Workshop 4** delegates placed a catheter for medical adhesive ablation in a leg simulator, then were trying out long- and short-stretched medical compression stockings. In the third station the material for thrombolysis and stenting for acute DVT was demonstrated and the learners could discuss practical difficulties with two well-known tutors. They were also able to meet the expert in a fourth station, unravelling all details about mini-phlebectomy, from the use of the right technique to potential complications.



Workshop 4

Finally, in **Workshop 5** the learners performed live duplex ultrasound imaging in patients with different types of vein pathologies. Dr Uldis Maurins and his team had collected numerous patients from their practice, well representing a variety of disease stages. Apart from practical tips about how to position the patient properly, use appropriate transducers, know imaging principles and optimize the image, the learners could have the real 'hand-on' experience, investigating patients with several types of superficial and deep venous problems.



Workshop 5