

ISFP 2008 Vienna: Congress Summary

The 19th International Congress on Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis was held in Vienna, Austria at the Old General Hospital, from July 6 to July 10, 2008. More than 220 delegates from 35 different countries attended the congress. There were trade displays from 4 exhibitors. For the second time, after the Congress in San Diego, abstracts from the Congress were published on CD by the Journal of Thrombosis and Haemostasis, the official journal of the International Society for Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis. The CD was included in the August issue of the Journal of Thrombosis and Haemostasis.

As basic science and clinical investigations and the development of new therapeutic approaches critically depend on each other and combined efforts are necessary to develop new strategies for the prevention and treatment of numerous diseases such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, cancer, neurologic disease, and inflammation, to which components of the fibrinolytic system, proteases, their inhibitors, receptors and cofactors contribute, it was the major goal of the 2008 ISFP Congress to position this meeting at the interphase of basic and clinical research thereby integrating basic and clinical research aspects in order to attract basic scientists as well as cardiologists, neurologists and haematologists/oncologists.

Scientific Programme

The first Plenary Session on Monday highlighted the role of different serpins. Dr. Geiger (Medical University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria) highlighted the various function of PCI/PAI-3. Dr. Mc Kee (University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, USA) reviewed the role of alpha2-antiplasmin in the fibrinolytic system and Dr. Yepes (Emory University, Atlanta, USA) talked about the involvement of neuroserpin in neurological disease. In a Workshop, Monday afternoon, newly developed antithrombotic drugs were presented. Dr. Kristensen (Aarhus University Hospital, Aarhus, Denmark) focused on new ADP-receptor-blockers, Dr. De Caterina (Gabriele d'Annunzio University, Chieti, Italy) gave an overview on direct antithrombins and Dr. Rupprecht (Klinikum Ruesselsheim, Ruesselsheim, Germany) presented direct and indirect factor Xa inhibitors. Oral Sessions on "Plasminogen Activation and Tumor Biology", which was introduced by a State of the Art Lecture with the same title and delivered by Dr. Blasi (University Vita Salute San Raffaele and Institute of Molecular Oncology, Milano, Italy), "Fibrinolysis Mechanisms", "Assays and Pitfalls", "Structure and Novel Molecules" and "Cell Biology and Signalling" and two Poster Sessions completed the scientific programme on the first day.

On Tuesday the Plenary Session was devoted to a clinical topic and was entitled "Back to Thrombolysis". Dr. Hacke (Medical University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany), Dr. Huber (Wilheminenhospital Vienna, Vienna, Austria) and Dr. Konstantinides (Medical University of Goettingen, Goettingen, Germany) highlighted recent developments in the clinical setting, which led to a renaissance of thrombolytic therapy in stroke, myocardial infarction and pulmonary embolism. In a Workshop entitled "Assays and Pitfalls" Dr. Declerck (University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium) talked about the specificity of immuno assay. Dr. Longstaff (National Institute for Biological Standards and Control, South Mimms, Herts, UK) focused in his presentation on the development and on standardization procedure for immuno-assays and assays measuring

enzymatic activity. Finally Dr. Amiral took the audience on a journey from assay development to final certification of an assay as a routine diagnostic tool (Hyphen BioMed, Neuville-sur-Oise, France). Oral Sessions on “Plasminogen Activation and Vascular Biology”, which was introduced by a state of the art lecture entitled Cellular and Pericellular Proteases in Angiogenesis” and delivered by Dr. Dewerchin (University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium), “Thrombosis and Thrombolysis”, “Novel Drugs”, “Plasminogen Activation and Tumor Biology”, “Cell Biology and Signalling” and “Fibrinolysis Mechanisms” and two Poster Sessions completed the scientific programme on the second day.

On Wednesday Dr. Castellino (University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, USA) delivered his Wyeth-ISFP Prize Lecture entitled “My 40 year Waltz with the hemostasis system displayed many “natural” and “reverse” turns” in which he reviewed his impressive work on components of the fibrinolytic and coagulation system covering more than three decades of biochemistry and molecular biology. In a Plenary Session entitled “Obesity and the Plasminogen/Plasminogen Activator System” Dr. Lijnen (University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium) presented the newest findings on the role of matrix metalloproteinases in the development of adipose tissue. Dr. de Taye (Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA) presented evidence for a role of the fibrinolytic system in obesity and Dr. Alessi (Universite de la Mediterranee, Marseille, France) covered more clinical aspects of the involvement of PAI-1 in obesity and associated diseases. Oral Sessions on “Plasminogen Activation and Infection”, which was introduced by a State of the Art Lecture delivered by Dr. Lathem and entitled “Plasminogen Activation and Extracellular Proteolysis During Primary Pneumonic Plaque”, on “PAI-1 and Other Serpins”, “TAFI” and “Clinical Fibrinolysis” and two Poster Sessions completed the programme on the third day.

In the last Plenary Session on Thursday Dr. Superti-Furga (Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria) gave a lecture on new developments of proteomic approaches, Dr. Barlow (Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria) talked about new perspectives in the quickly developing field of epigenetics and Dr. Weinberger (Biocrates Life Sciences AG, Innsbruck, Austria) gave an overview of the field of metabolomics. Oral Sessions on “Plasminogen Activation and Neurobiology, which was introduced by a State of the Art Lecture by Dr. Strickland (The Rockefeller University, New York, USA) with them same title, and on “Plasminogen Activation and Obesity” concluded the programme of our congress.

In summary a total of 99 abstracts were selected for presentation in 14 Oral Sessions, as mentioned above. A total of 52 abstracts were selected for poster presentation in 6 Poster Sessions, which were accompanied by wine and cheese to stimulate discussion.

Social Program

The Opening Ceremony was held on Sunday in the main lecture hall of the Old General Hospital Campus and was followed by the Welcome Reception at the so-called "Narrenturm" (Fool's Tower), which was opened in 1784 as the first psychiatric hospital in Europe, with typical Viennese food and drinks and traditional Viennese music. Delegates had the option to take a guided tour through the Federal Pathological-Anatomical Museum located nowadays in the tower. During the congress the delegates enjoyed lunches provided by the organizers at the

Campus area surrounding the lecture halls. The official Congress Dinner was held on Tuesday evening in the Urania, a public educational institute and observatory, which was built in typical Art Nouveau style in 1910 at the mouth of the Wien River. The delegates enjoyed fine food and wine on the roof terrace in pleasant weather. They were offered guided tours through the observatory and had the chance to take a close look of the moon and the Jupiterian moons.