

PAVING THE WAY FOR GOOD UROLOGICAL HEALTH

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The 46th SMA National Medical Convention, Good Urological Health, was held at Sheraton Towers Singapore on 25 July 2015 with close to 400 members of the public and 100 doctors in attendance. In line with SMA's new slogan, "For Doctors, For Patients", launched in June this year, the annual convention aims to address topics that are of current interest to both the medical profession and the public.

PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM

The public symposium commenced with the welcome address delivered by Dr Ng Chee Kwan, Chairperson of the Convention Organising Committee. Dr Ng was heartened by the overwhelming attendance, which he considered a sign of the public's interest in urological issues. He then introduced the topics and the outstanding panel of speakers for the symposium.

In his opening address, Dr Wong Tien Hua, President of SMA, clarified the difference between urology and gynaecology, and underscored the importance of public awareness and education. He also congratulated the organising committee on a well-planned conference and thanked the speakers for setting aside time to conduct the various sessions.

Thereafter, the participants adjoined for the concurrent talks in either English or Mandarin. The topics for his year's convention were: BPH and Prostate Cancer – Men's Problems That Affect Couples; Getting Control of Urinary Incontinence; and Treating Male Infertility – What Can Be Done?

PROSTATE PROBLEMS AND YOUR SEX LIFE

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostate cancer are male problems that can affect a couple's sex life. This interesting topic was delivered in English by Dr Colin Teo, a senior consultant from Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and in Mandarin by Dr Tan Yeh Hong, consultant urologist at Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre and the president of Singapore Urological Association.

Through the use of diagrams, analogies and a short video, Dr Teo and Dr Tan illustrated how to locate the prostate, explained how prostate problems affect a man's sexual performance, as well as elaborated on the available treatment modalities, including medication and surgical procedures. In spite of the sensitive nature of the topic, both speakers were able to effectively engage the audience with their candid, and sometimes, hilarious illustrations, drawing loud guffaws from the audience. Importantly, the speakers continually encouraged their audiences to keep a healthy lifestyle and to remain vigilant and optimistic if diagnosed with prostate problems.

HELP, I CAN'T HOLD IT IN!

Urinary incontinence (UI) – the loss of bladder control – is a common and often embarrassing condition that affects both men and women, especially the aged and obese. Dr Sharon Yeo and Dr Tricia Kuo, consultants at Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Singapore General Hospital, respectively, were the English and Mandarin speakers for the second sessions.

Both Dr Yeo and Dr Kuo started by introducing the four types of UI and how each type of UI is diagnosed and treated. Management with medication, Botox injections, surgery, nerve stimulations and other treatments were briefly touched on. The speakers also dispensed helpful advice on lifestyle changes to improve bladder control, such as reducing one's coffee and alcohol intake, maintaining a healthy weight and practising kegel exercises. Participants were also urged to follow some simple but effective strategies, which could not only help stop the leak, but also enable them to lead a relatively normal life.

Legend

1. Dr Wong Tien Hua delivering his opening address
2. Dr Colin Teo commencing with the first English topic
3. Dr Tan Yeh Hong speaking about prostate problems during the Mandarin session
4. Dr Ng Chee Kwan presenting the token of appreciation to Dr Sharon Yeo
5. Dr Tricia Kuo presenting on the topic of UI
6. Participants discussing their concerns with Dr Colin Teo during break time
7. Dr Joe Lee during the last Mandarin session for the morning





MALE INFERTILITY

Reproduction is a simple and natural experience for most couples. However, for some couples, conception is very difficult. Addressing the issue of male infertility in English and Mandarin respectively was Dr Simon Chong, a consultant at Pacific Healthcare Specialist Centre and Dr Joe Lee, a consultant at National University Hospital.

For a start, the speakers defined male infertility and also outlined the anatomy of the male reproductive system. To help the audience better understand the function and importance of each part of the male reproductive system, both speakers used a number of diagrams and analogies. For example, Dr Lee used the analogy of a water faucet drawing water from a reservoir to illustrate the path of sperms. The speakers also highlighted factors that can lead to male infertility and the various treatment options such as the use of medications, surgery and non-surgical treatments. Lifestyle changes such as exercise and the use of natural remedies such as supplements were also covered by the speakers.

All three talks concluded with question-and-answer (Q & A) segments where the participants raised queries

mostly pertaining to treatment, the length of medication use and dietary intervention to decrease the risk of the various urological problems. Participants who had been diagnosed also asked specific questions about their conditions and management. The Q & A sessions were obviously popular with the participants as evidenced by the crowds surrounding the speakers after the sessions, even during tea break and lunch!

All in all, the Public Symposium was a big success. Hopefully, the participants walked away with not only greater insights on the various urological issues, but also practical knowledge on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle so as to keep urological problems at bay.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

SMA News caught up with some of the participants to find out their thoughts on the convention.

"The symposium is really helpful. The speakers are engaging and the explanations are easy for laymen to understand. I feel reassured to know that prostate problems don't necessarily mean cancer," says Mr Colin Yeo, a middle-aged gentleman who attended the English talks with

his wife, Mdm Irene Lim. "Very informative and enjoyable! I especially found the recommendations on surgery sound and useful. We'll definitely look out for future SMA talks," added Mdm Lim.

Mdm Chan Siew Khin, who attended the Mandarin talks with her two sisters, has this to say, "We found out about the talks through *Lianhe Wanbao*. We've learnt so much about the various aspects of urological health, especially urinary incontinence, which is a problem in older women."

Legend

- 8.** Dr Koh Li-Tsa discussing the topic on UI management
- 9.** Dr Ng Chee Kwan speaking during the medical symposium
- 10.** Lunch symposium participants listening attentively
- 11.** Dr Li Man-kay presenting updates on PDE inhibitors
- 12.** Dr Simon Chong during his segment on managing male sexual dysfunction
- 13.** Dr Lim Kok Bin elaborating on management of testosterone deficiency
- 14.** Dr Leong Hoe Nam, wrapping up the medical symposium with the final topic



LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

The lunch symposium commenced at 1.25 pm with Dr Ng Chee Kwan addressing the doctor participants and thanking Pfizer Pte Ltd for sponsoring the lunch spread. More than 70 doctors gathered in the ballroom and tuned in to the talks as they enjoyed the sumptuous buffet.

PDE INHIBITION AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

Dr Li Man-kay, urologist and kidney transplant surgeon at Li Man Kay Urology Associates, Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital, kicked off the lunch symposium by outlining the various types of phosphodiesterase (PDE) inhibitors. According to Dr Li, PDE5 inhibitors are commonly used for erectile dysfunction. Through various diagrams, he elaborated on

PDE5 inhibitors' effects on achieving and maintaining erection in men, and compared the effectiveness of the various PDE inhibitors.

According to Dr Li, there are uses of sildenafil for non-erectile dysfunction purposes, such as increasing exercise capacity, improving cardiac output, and increasing memory power. The session concluded with information sharing on sildenafil orodispersible tablets.

MANAGEMENT OF URINARY INCONTINENCE

Dr Koh Li-Tsa, consultant at the department of urology, Changi General Hospital, began her presentation by providing a recap of the definition of UI and a comparison of the various surgical options available. She also highlighted the usage and

implementation of male slings for men suffering from stress UI.

Moving on, Dr Koh gave an update on the management of overactive bladder, with a brief review of the condition and the common types of treatment currently approved for use, including the associated cautionary notes and side effects of each treatment modality. She then introduced recent advances in treatment of overactive bladder, such as the use of beta-3 adrenergic agonist, mirabegron and botulinum Toxin A (Botox), giving recommendations on when to prescribe Botox to patients.

MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM

The Medical Symposium, the final segment of the convention, commenced immediately after lunch. Dr Ng Chee Kwan, Dr Simon Chong, Dr Lim Kok Bin and Dr Leong Hoe Nam spoke on prostate health, sexual health, management of testosterone deficiency syndrome and management of urethral discharge and genital ulcers, respectively.

MANAGING PROSTATE HEALTH

Dr Ng Chee Kwan, a consultant urologist at CK Ng Urology & Minimally Invasive Surgery, was the first speaker at the Medical Symposium. He reported that prostate disease is a major cause of urinary symptoms in older men and listed symptoms that would identify BPH and prostatitis. Dr Ng suggested a workflow for GPs managing patients with lower urinary tract symptoms. The first step is history taking and a physical examination, which includes a prostate examination, urinalysis, discussion on PSA screening and a voiding diary, if indicated. Thereafter, the next course of action, such as surveillance, use of alpha blockers, PDE5 inhibitors or additional 5ARI and referral to a urologist, can be decided. Dr Ng added that patients with uncomplicated prostate issues can be managed at their GP clinic with appropriate therapy.

MALE SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Next up was Dr Simon Chong, who began his session with a short anecdote on what a GP should ask a patient who claims that PDE5 inhibitors do not work for them. Following that, Dr Chong listed the treatments for erectile dysfunction, including the use of sildenafil, low-intensity shockwave therapy and others. Tips were given on how to manage premature ejaculation, as well as the treatments options available. Dr Chong also highlighted Peyronie's disease, a common condition that many men suffer from without realising it. According to Dr Chong, treatment for male sexual dysfunction requires an all-rounded approach, as it can co-exist with many other issues. It should be used as an opportunity to screen for and manage associated conditions.

MEN AND TESTOSTERONE

Dr Lim Kok Bin, a consultant from Raffles Hospital, focused on the management of testosterone deficiency syndrome due to late onset hypogonadism, and elaborated on the ill effects of low testosterone levels. He also elaborated on the positive influence that improvement of testosterone levels has on prostate health. Dr Lim then spoke extensively about testosterone replacement therapy, including the results reported in published studies, and touched briefly on alternative treatment options.

A member of the audience inquired about testosterone replacement for the elderly (aged ≥ 75 years), as he had heard that it helps cognitive function besides sexual health. Dr Lim replied that results from current studies on testosterone's effect on cognitive function are mixed. Although he saw no harm in trying it, he also warned that expectations should not be too high.

GENITAL ULCERS AND URETHRITIS

The final speaker for the day was Dr Leong Hoe Nam, medical director at Rophi Clinic, who spoke on the topic of genital ulcers and urethritis. He presented a chart listing the most common infectious genital ulcers and the less common non-infectious ones, followed by advice on questions a doctor should raise with patients

consulting on genital ulcers. Dr Leong also touched on several sexually transmitted diseases, dispensed advice on examination, listed treatment methods and cautioned about the rise of drug resistant gonorrhoea. He concluded his talk by highlighting pelvic pain syndrome and other forms of prostatitis, and gave suggestions on how GPs can manage such conditions.

CONCLUSION

The 46th SMA National Medical Convention – featuring three symposiums comprising 12 talks – concluded with great success in the late afternoon.

The Convention Organising Committee Chairperson, Dr Ng Chee Kwan, and the rest of the committee thank all invited speakers, guests and participants for taking the time to attend the convention. The committee would also like to express their appreciation to the convention's sponsors: Tote Board, Lee Foundation, Pfizer Pte Ltd, Astellas Pharma Singapore Pte Ltd, Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd, Eli Lilly (Singapore) Pte Ltd, GlaxoSmithKline Pte Ltd, SCA Hygiene Singapore Pte Ltd as well as our product sponsors. ♦

