



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

evf HOW 2018 – Education in Venous Disease

The 10th evf HOW will be held in Jurmala (Riga), Latvia

17 – 19 October 2019

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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 9 years, this combination of learning instruction has been shown to be successful and was so again at the 9th EVF HOW, which took place in Limassol, Cyprus on 25-27 October, 2018. Each Workshop is limited to 100 participants. A faculty of more than 30 ensures an unusual low learner/instructor ratio (3:1). 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 **10th EVF HOW**, which is planned to go for the first time to Latvia, in Jurmala (nearby Riga) on **17-19 October 2019**. Almost 1000 physicians, including the 9th 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 100 participants are accepted on a “first come – first served” basis, it is recommended to 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 is 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 fulfill 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 100 to facilitate interaction between instructors and delegates and thus the faculty/learner ratio is high – 1/3
- 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 2019 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, called EVF 'venous interactive portfolio' (EVF VIP). 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. Additional material will be added during this year. 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 EVF VIP 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 9th evf HOW 2018 in Limassol, Cyprus

The 9th EVF HOW took place at the Grand Resort in Limassol, Cyprus, 25-27 October, 2018. This facility was excellent for our needs. Dr Stylianos Papas 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 85% 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 97% and a vast majority of learners stated the information they learnt would be implemented in their practice, which is really promising!

More than half of the delegates were vascular surgeons (59%) (including some cardiovascular) followed by other specialties such as general surgery (10%), dermatology (6%), interventional radiology (5%), angiology and phlebology. We welcomed learners from 28 different countries. Although two third of learners came from Europe (79%), with Slovakia at the top representing 16% of all learners, other countries and continents were represented, as previous years (Middle East 9%, and a total of 12% from India, China, Colombia, El Salvador and South Africa).

The Program of evf HOW 2018

The instruction at the 9th Hands-on Workshop on Venous Disease, 2018, was provided by an international faculty with 26 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 four stations were aimed at 'meeting and chatting with the expert', which resulted to be very successful stations.

Presentations and Live Demonstration

The presentations spanned the following subjects:

- *Basic principles* of venous pathophysiology; 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 and glue ablation, means, and open surgery; in addition techniques preserving the saphenous vein were highlighted. The controversies of the perforators were elucidated, interventions for recurrent or residual varicose veins and pelvic congestion syndrome were 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* using a sequential treatment plan was presented, focusing on management of venous ulcers in clinical practice, the use of compression, treatment of 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 live demonstration of duplex ultrasound scanning (DUS) of the deep venous system was performed to show 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

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 pelvic vein incompetence, superficial and deep venous aneurysms, acute iliofemoral DVT, chronic outflow obstruction, venous ulcer management and treatment of underlying superficial and/or deep venous problems, 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. Srujal SHAH from India for his presentation about "*Phlegmasia alba dolens. A case of life threatening massive DVT managed successfully*". 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.



Case Presentation 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 and in the next station strong short-stretch compression bandage was applied by each learner on another, so everyone could experience what a correctly applied bandage feels like. 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 advanced therapy solutions for venous leg ulcers 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 sulfate and tried out mechano-chemical ablation (MOCA) with a recently introduced new device.



Workshop 2

In the first station of **Workshop 3** a new venous stent was demonstrated in a venous anatomy model. 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 by extensively discussing management of pelvic vein incompetence in clinical practice.



Workshop 3

In **Workshop 4** delegates placed a catheter for medical adhesive ablation in a leg simulator, then looked at the specifics of another dedicated venous stent, discussing practical difficulties with the tutor. They were also able to meet the experts in this workshop, first the expert in catheter-directed thrombolysis for acute DVT treatment and then the expert in miniphlebectomy, who both unraveled all details, from proper indications, the use of the right technique to potential complications.



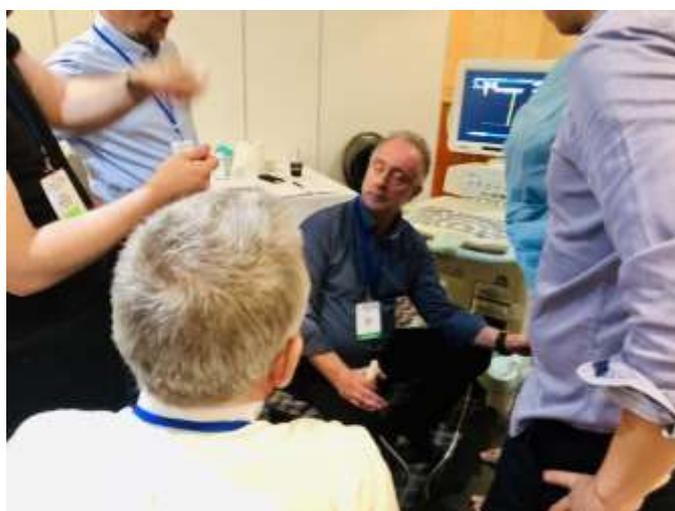
Workshop 4

In **Workshop 5** placement of yet another venous stent was practiced and its unique requirements were discussed. Then the learners were trying out long- and short-stretched medical compression stockings, measuring the actual working pressure of the stocking. In the next station potential benefits of veno-active drugs were discussed with the learners and in the last station were familiarized with Intravascular Ultrasound (IVUS) in a model, learning how to interpret IVUS images.



Workshop 5

Finally, in **Workshop 6** the learners performed live duplex ultrasound imaging in patients with different types of vein pathologies. Dr Stylianos Papas had collected numerous patients from his practice, well representing a variety of disease. 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 6

evf HOW Plus report 2018

In 2018, four EVF HOW Plus courses were organized. The formula of the EVF HOW Plus courses, is small participant groups with stimulating programs containing inter-active elements and practical aspects. Education is provided by some world renowned experts which guarantees a high level of participant experience and satisfaction.

On the 16th and 17th of April 2018, at the Department of Vascular Surgery in Modena, Italy, the EVF HOW Plus '**Deep Valve Repair**' Course was organized by Prof. Oscar Maleti and Dr Marzia Lugli with 4 participants. This course offered a unique experience, whereby participants not only gained knowledge from a world leading Centre in this particular field, but also had the possibility to 'scrub in' with the experts in the operating room. The participants were learning all they wanted to know about vein valve reconstructions in primary and secondary venous disease.

On the 7th and 8th of May 2018 in the Department of Vascular Surgery in Modena, another EVF HOW Plus course was dedicated to the practical aspects of **Venous Stenting**, again organized by Marzia Lugli and Oscar Maleti. This was an excellent opportunity for 4 qualified participants to improve their practical skills in venous stenting procedures and performance. Several venous stenting procedures were performed where the participants had an opportunity to scrub-in.

On the 7th and 8th of November 2018 the EVF HOW Plus **Venous Stenting Training Days** were organized once again by Dr Stephen Black and his team, at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, London UK. The London course was supported by another world well known leader in the field of the local thrombolysis – Professor Niels Baekgaard from Copenhagen, Denmark. Twenty participants had an opportunity to see and discuss many live deep venous cases – directly transmitted from the OR. They could also obtain more detailed knowledge about the indications, qualification and techniques of venous stenting procedures and local thrombolytic treatment. The role of IUVS as well as dedicated venous stents was also presented and discussed.



EVF HOW Plus London Sent and Thrombolysis Training Days

On the 23rd and 24th of November, in Thun, Switzerland, 18 participants took part in the last EVF HOW Plus course of the year, on **Sclerotherapy and Phlebectomies**. The course director was Dr Dominik Heim, Switzerland, and the participants had an excellent opportunity not only to examine venous patients, but also to perform sclerotherapy together with experienced tutors and scrub in for performing phlebectomies. The course was very practical, and the main goal was to improve the skills of the participants in sclerotherapy and mini-phlebectomy.



EVF HOW Plus Sclerotherapy and Phlebectomy Team

In 2019 the EVF HOW Plus program will continue with a variety of practical courses covering different topics of venous disease, diagnostics and treatment. Detailed information will be available on our website www.evfvip.com