COMMENTARY

9th Skin Academy Symposium: Building Bridges in Dermatology Chair's Introduction

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ABSTRACT

An introduction to the proceedings sharing an overview of presentations given as part of the 9th Skin Academy Symposium, held in Barcelona, Spain, April 9–10, 2016. The Skin Academy is an international and interdisciplinary dermatology initiative created to contribute to the growth in scientific knowledge of those dealing with skin diseases. This year's meeting aimed to 'build bridges' between the latest research and everyday clinical practice, providing dermatologists with important updates on some of the most common skin diseases, as well as current 'hot' topics.

Keywords: Acne; Actinic keratosis; Atopic dermatitis; Cyclooxygenase; Rosacea; Psoriasis; Psychologic burden; Skin cancer

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It was my great honor and pleasure to act as the Chairperson for the 9th Skin Academy Symposium, which was held in Barcelona, Spain, April 9–10, 2016. The Skin Academy is an international and interdisciplinary dermatology initiative created to contribute to the growth in scientific knowledge of those dealing with skin diseases. This year's meeting aimed to 'build bridges' between the latest research and everyday clinical practice, providing dermatologists with important updates on some of the most common skin diseases, as well as current 'hot' topics. Experts from the USA, Europe, and Canada shared recent data and clinical updates on a range of diverse themes, including skin cancer, actinic keratosis, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, and acne, as well as the potential psychologic impact that such skin conditions can have on patients. These proceedings provide an overview of the presentations given as a part of this meeting, and a brief description of the content for each of the five articles follows.

The first article (*Skin cancer—epidemiology, disease burden, pathophysiology, diagnosis, and therapeutic approaches*, by Zoe Apalla, Dorothée Nashan, Richard Weller, and Xavier Castellsagué) focuses on different aspects of skin cancer. The increased incidence of skin cancer and its notable disease burden are highlighted, while real-life clinical cases are discussed in the context of considering different treatment strategies to obtain better

outcomes for patients. In addition, the potential risks and benefits of increased sun exposure are carefully assessed in view of evidence suggesting that the benefits of the association between sunlight and reduced all-cause mortality may outweigh the risks of skin cancer. At the end of this article, key aspects of human papillomavirus that dermatologists should be aware of are presented in the form of a user-friendly Q&A section.

The second article (*Cyclooxygenase in cancer prevention and treatments for actinic keratosis*, by Gareth Thomas and Colin Morton) explains the significance of targeting the cyclooxygenase pathway in the prevention of skin cancer, highlighting evidence for a chemoprotective effect of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. An overview of therapies for actinic keratosis is also provided, alongside a discussion of the challenges associated with increased therapy choice in terms of patient and prescriber preference, as well as cost-effectiveness.

The third article (*Psoriasis and atopic dermatitis*, by Christopher E. M. Griffiths, Peter van de Kerkhof, and Magdalena Czarnecka-Operacz) discusses two chronic inflammatory conditions of the skin, psoriasis and atopic dermatitis. Data on incidence and prevalence, risk factors, and comorbidities associated with each of these conditions are reviewed, while the need for an improvement in our epidemiologic knowledge of psoriasis is highlighted. Moreover, the authors emphasize the need for individually tailored, personalized treatment regimens, in terms of both psoriasis and atopic dermatitis, to improve outcomes.

The fourth article (*Acne and rosacea*, by Mauro Picardo, Lawrence Eichenfield, and Jerry Tan) argues that alterations in lipid metabolism and its interaction with both the skin microbiome and innate immunity can represent an important therapeutic target in acne, one of the most common skin diseases. Particular attention is given to treatment challenges in pediatric and adolescent acne, and it is stressed that acne between the ages of 1 and 7 years should always be evaluated for underlying endocrinopathy, while antibiotics

should be used judiciously in children. Another facial inflammatory dermatosis, rosacea, is also discussed in this article, with emphasis being placed on its complex pathophysiology and how best to optimize clinical care in patients with this condition, based on the latest research findings.

The fifth and final article in these proceedings (*The potential psychological impact of skin conditions*, by Ari Tuckman) brings into focus a common denominator of all the conditions discussed above: the significant psychologic burden that patients with visible skin conditions experience. The article highlights how to actively manage patients' expectations so that they are happier with the treatment outcome and encourages dermatologists to take an active role in helping their patients live a full life, beyond their symptoms.

The 9th Skin Academy Symposium was an insightful and inspiring meeting of high educational value. We hope these proceedings will contribute further to the understanding of the skin diseases discussed in the articles herein, encourage best possible treatment outcomes, and promote an improved quality of life for affected patients.

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