FVH Partners Program Newsletter

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NUCLEAR MEDICINE IS EFFECTIVE IN DIAGNOSING

"HARD TO IDENTIFY" FORMS OF HEART DISEASE

From October 13th to 15th, 2023, a scientific conference titled "Updates in the Management of Congenital Heart Disease and Structural Heart Disease: Foetal to Adult Patients" was held in Ho Chi Minh City. The conference was organised by the Vietnam Echocardiography Society. During the conference, Dr Nguyen Van Te, a leading expert at FV Hospital in the field of nuclear medicine, provided updates on new knowledge related to diagnosing the heart condition amyloidosis using nuclear imaging techniques.

Amyloidosis, or cardiac amyloidosis, is a rare condition characterised by the abnormal deposition of insoluble protein fibres in the extracellular space, causing damage to the heart. This is a rare and highly dangerous condition that has been underdiagnosed until recently that continues to pose challenges in the fields of medical diagnosis and treatment. In his report on "Nuclear Imaging in Diagnosis of Amyloid Cardiomyopathy," Dr Nguyen Van Te, Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department at FV Hospital, indicates that the causes of cardiac amyloidosis can be divided into two main groups. The first is amyloidosis originating from disorders in plasma cell-produced light chain immunoglobulins (AL), which leads to excessive light chain immunoglobulin (Ig) production. This form accounts for approximately 2500 new cases each year. From the time of diagnosis with heart failure symptoms, the life expectancy of these patients is usually less than one year.

The second group involves transthyretin-related amyloidosis (ATTR), a type of protein synthesised in the liver with a misfolded process. ATTR can be further

categorised into hereditary (hATTR) when a gene mutation is present or wild-type (wATTR) ATTR, typically seen in people over 60 years of age. Currently, non-invasive methods such as blood and urine tests, electrocardiograms, echocardiography, and cardiac MRI aid in diagnosing cardiac amyloidosis. However, there are still significant limitations and uncertainties in the diagnosis.

To accurately diagnose cardiac amyloidosis, heart biopsy is considered the gold standard. However, this is an invasive procedure associated with potential complications and not widely available. "Nuclear imaging is a safe, non-invasive method with a sensitivity of over 85 per cent and high specificity of up to 99 per cent in distinguishing AL and ATTR. This method can completely replace heart biopsy, it is cost-effective, and patients do not need the same preparations as they would for surgery," emphasised Dr Te.

Dr Nguyen Van Te described how a special bone-seeking radiopharmaceutical molecule called Technetium-99m is injected intravenously before the patient is scanned using single photon emission computed tomography/computed tomography (SPECT/CT). The result is anatomical images along with quantitative and qualitative assessment of cardiac radiotracer uptake, allowing doctors to accurately determine the patient's cardiac pathological condition. The protocol that DrTe has implemented at FV is based on the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology (ASNC) guidelines. Dr Te also presented several cases of cardiac amyloidosis that were accurately diagnosed at the Cardiology and Nuclear Medicine Department at FV for the first time in February 2021.

To contact Nuclear Medicine Department, FV Hospital, please call: (028) 54 11 33 33 - Ext. 1254, 3000

MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM ON

NUTRITIONAL INTERVENTION FOR OPTIMISING STRATEGIES IN



Nguyen Thuy Linh, MD, PhD, (Deputy Head of Nutrition, Hanoi Medical University Hospital) highlighted clear clinical benefits. They identified that 80.4% of cancer patients suffer from malnutrition, 30% are ineligible for chemotherapy due to poor health, and around 42.5% suffer from irreversible malnutrition.

Dr Tuong proposed the 3T nutritional nurturing

ONCOLOGY AND SURGERY TREATMENT

V Hospital, in collaboration with Hanoi Medical University, has successfully hosted the medical symposium "Nutritional Care & New Technical Updates in Oncology & Surgery." The conference took place on the morning of November 11, 2023, in Ho Chi Minh City, and was attended by more than 230 doctors and experts in the fields of oncology, surgery, and nutrition.



Opening the event, Dr Do Trong Khanh (Medical Director, FV Hospital) affirmed FV's commitment to becoming Vietnam's world-class destination hospital, aiming to alleviate pressure on major public hospitals in Ho Chi Minh City. This goal is pursued through patient-centric models, investment in technology, and multidisciplinary collaboration in treatment.



Kicking off the seminar, distinguished speakers in the field of surgery included Tran Phung Dung Tien, MD, PhD (Head of Gastroenterology and Hepatology Department, Cho Ray Hospital), Dr Phan Van Thai, Specialist Level II (Head of General Surgery Department, FV Hospital), and Le Quan Anh Tuan, MD, PhD, (Head of Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic Surgery Department, University Medical Centre HCMC). They presented clinical cases highlighting the significant correlation between nutrition and surgery.

Dr Tien addressed postoperative nutritional issues following colorectal cancer surgery, while Dr Thai emphasised postoperative challenges after total pancreatectomy due to intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms (IPMN) or pancreatic cancer. Both stressed the vital role of a proper nutritional strategy pre-, during, and post-surgery for optimal patient outcomes.

Dr Tuan's presentation focused on the difficulties in implementing Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) in clinical practice, particularly regarding coordinating between various specialties and units. Similar to preceding speakers, Dr Tuan highlighted the necessity and effectiveness of ERAS in postoperative recovery.

Dr Basma M'Barek (Head of Hy Vong Cancer Care Centre, FV Hospital) spoke about nutrition related to cancer radiotherapy, explaining how advanced radiotherapy techniques aided nutritional recovery for cancer patients. Proper application of advanced radiotherapy (IMRT, VMAT, SBRT, etc.) at the right time and dosage stabilises the patient's condition, facilitating early nutritional support, accurate treatment plans and reducing treatment interruptions, acute side effects, and treatment costs.

Concentrating on nutrition for cancer patients, Dr Tran Thi Anh Tuong, Specialist Level II (Head of Nutrition & Dietetics Department, Ho Chi Minh City Oncology Hospital) and strategy (targeting, titrating, timing) and early feeding through PEG tube insertion for head and neck cancer patients, intervening in cancer cachexia, dietary adjustments, ensuring a more consistent approach to nutritional support during treatment. Dr Linh detailed nutritional challenges in head and neck cancer cases, providing feeding options to ensure nutrition while minimising risks, even in cases requiring guidance for a patient's family members.

In a separate presentation titled "The Role of Immune-Supporting Nutrients in Cancer Patients Undergoing Surgery, Chemotherapy, and Radiotherapy," Dr Nguyen Viet Quynh Thu, Specialist Level II (Head of Nutrition & Dietetics Department, FV Hospital) emphasised the effectiveness and safety of this nutrient group in reducing hospital stay, treatment costs, and complications in cancer patients. Aligning with clinical nutrition experts, Dr Thu stressed the importance of establishing a Nutritional Support Team (NST) within hospitals.

The medical symposium "Nutritional Care and New Technical Updates in Oncology and Surgery" introduced many treatment updates to attendees, especially with regards to clinical nutrition issues. Ultimately, this development of new insights will support the development of more effective treatment plans for oncological and surgical diseases, ensuring a better quality of life for patients.







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TWO CUTTING-EDGE MEDICAL TECHNICAL REPORTS

EARN EXCELLENCE AUARDS FROM FV

Technologists Conference (VART 2023) was held on October 20th and 21st at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Hanoi. Participating in the conference, FV Hospital presented two reports on nuclear medicine and radiation therapy, both of which were recognised with Outstanding Presenter Awards.

In his report titled "Imaging Techniques with 99mtc-hmdp Bone Tracer in Diagnosing Restrictive Cardiac Amyloidosis," Mr Nguyen Chi Tam (Nuclear Medicine Department – FV Hospital) elaborated on the imaging procedures being utilised at FV Hospital in diagnosing cardiac amyloidosis, commonly known as cardiac amyloidosis. This is a rare and potentially hazardous condition, partly due to being underdiagnosed. "Through cardiac imaging techniques, over the past two years, we have identified more than 20 cases of this condition at FV," states Mr Tam.

In another session, Ms Nguyen Thi Ngoc Kieu (Hy Vong Cancer Care Centre, FV Hospital) shared her report on "The Experience of Radiation Therapy Technicians in Total Body Irradiation (TBI) based on VMAT Technique," which also received significant attention. TBI is a sophisticated radiation therapy technique which is challenging to implement and not widely used in Vietnam. It's indicated for treating malignant haematological diseases or preparing patients before bone marrow transplantation. "This technique has been implemented at FV and has proven to bring many benefits to patients, increasing the chance of successfully treating malignant haematologic diseases," shares Ms Kieu.

Mr Phang Duc Tin (Head of Therapeutic Radiography, Radiotherapy Department, FV Hospital), a member of the Executive Board of the Vietnam Association of Radiological Technologist, shared, "These conferences are opportunities for colleagues to gather and share experiences and knowledge in their hospital practices. This helps improve technical expertise and enhances the standing of this field."

In addition to investing in state-of-the-art equipment, FV Hospital particularly emphasises the consistent development of clinical and paraclinical expertise.





Unveiling Optimal Treatment Options For CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

he Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) technique has emerged as a vital tool in cardiac interventions, especially in stent placement, coronary revascularisation, assessing deployed stents, and treating narrowed coronary arteries. With its superior resolution and ability to display detailed layers of arterial tissue, OCT provides precise information, aiding physicians in making optimised treatment decisions for improved patient outcomes.

Despite OCT being available for approximately 20 years, it has only become more widespread in Vietnam in recent years. Advancements in technology have notably enhanced OCT resolution, allowing detailed visualisation of plaque components like calcium, fibrous tissue, lipid, thrombus, and the thickness of thin or thick fibrous caps. This aids in optimising interventions, particularly in cases where patients have previously undergone stent placement and experienced re-narrowing of coronary arteries, or to assess the optimal outcome of recently placed stents.

Previously, coronary artery imaging was done through digital subtraction angiography (DSA) or intravascular ultrasound (IVUS). However, drawbacks included image overlap and low resolution, limiting the evaluation of lesions. Operators might need to manipulate the catheter at multiple angles to obtain necessary images, leading to increased X-ray exposure. OCT has addressed these limitations, providing clearer and more detailed images, aiding in diagnosing 30% of missed diagnoses of narrowed coronary arteries.

In nearly two months of application, FV's Cardiology Department has employed OCT in over 15 coronary interventions cases, consistently yielding positive outcomes. OCT aids doctors in accurately diagnosing the cause of coronary narrowing, deciding the intervention method, determining stent size, checking stent positioning, assessing stent apposition to the vessel wall, and more. The duration of cardiac interventions using OCT ranges from 30 to 60 minutes per case, with marginal cost differences compared to IVUS. This not only results in economic benefits but also upholds the effectiveness of this technique. FV Hospital's Cardiology Department currently utilises one of the world's most advanced OCT systems, ensuring high-resolution images with minimal patient impact compared to other models.

With advancements in medical imaging technology, OCT promises further development, becoming a crucial tool in cardiac interventions. OCT facilitates a better understanding and effective treatment of coronary artery diseases, enhancing the efficiency of interventions and improving patients' quality of life.



To book an appointment with the Cardiology Department, FV Hospital, please call: (028) 54 11 33 33 - Ext. 1165, 1216

A Life-Changing, Surgery For A Young Cambodian Girl And Her Mother

nfortunately, H. Silvy was born with a congenital leg vascular malformation. At just one month old, she had to undergo surgery. Since then, Silvy has endured 10 surgeries in her home country. However, these treatments did not help her walk, and her leg developed more complications

"For eight years, someone has almost always had to carry her, and Silvy could only move with support. Her leg was bent about 120 to 130 degrees, unable to straighten. When she moved, her back would tilt to one side, and walking was very difficult and painful," said Ms S. Mary, Silvy's mother, describing the challenging circumstances her daughter faced. All of Silvy's activities relied on her family members because she couldn't walk normally. Her mother, in particular, was experiencing hardship. She carried and did everything for her in daily life.

Dr Truong Hoang Vinh Khiem, a Specialist Level II at FV's Bone & Joint Centre, was the physician directly responsible for examining Silvy. He determined that Silvy's condition was a type of vascular malformation that caused an increase in blood vessels, leading to blood vessel enlargement in her leg. Additionally, Silvy's case was complicated due to her many previous surgeries, which resulted in scarring and the development of fibrous tissue in her leg. Further surgery was challenging and risky. However, without prompt treatment, Silvy's condition would adversely affect the development of her back and left leg, causing her spinal curvature to worsen.

After thoroughly examining Silvy, Dr Khiem decided to perform the surgery, which marked her 11th surgical procedure. "My main goal when conducting the surgery is to help Silvy regain the ability to walk on her own legs. Even if she can only walk with assistance, use walking frames, or crutches, she can at least become more self-sufficient and relieve the burden on those around her, especially her mother," Dr Khiem states.

The surgery was primarily overseen by Dr Truong Hoang Vinh Khiem, Specialist Level II, and lasted more than four hours. Dr Khiem used surgical glasses to examine blood vessels, removed contracted soft tissue, eliminated vascular malformations, and delved deep into the joints to completely free them up. Subsequently, he used a technique to lengthen and straighten the child's leg and fixed the joint.

After surgery, Silvy's right leg had been straightened almost to its normal position. Just one day after the operation, she received physiotherapy, taking her first steps using both legs. Despite experiencing pain from the leg correction surgery, Silvy persevered in learning to walk, encouraged by her mother and the medical staff.

At the follow-up appointment on September 20th, about a month after the surgery, Silvy can walk with the help of a walker without assistance from family members. Her right leg, although still wrapped with a brace to prevent retraction, can almost be fully extended.









LAUNCHES

AMBLYOPIA TREATMENT SERVICES

ccording to the statistics from Hanoi Medical University (2019), an estimated 3 million Vietnamese children suffer from amblyopia, commonly known as lazy eye. FV Hospital has also observed a significant increase in children affected by this condition, prompting the implementation of early treatment services. This service has shown considerable effectiveness with children's vision improving from an initial level of below 2/10 to up to 7/10 to 10/10 after three months of amblyopia exercises

Dr Nguyen Thi Mai, Head of FV's Ophthalmology & Refractive Surgery Department, stated, "Studies indicate that treating amblyopia in children aged 9 and below has a high recovery potential, decreasing as they reach the age of 12. Therefore, early treatment for children under 12 is crucial to maximise visual recovery. Implementing this service at FV is particularly significant, providing children with amblyopia an opportunity to attain normal vision."

FV's amblyopia treatment protocol emphasises visual stimulation, incorporating specialised exercises alongside amblyopia training software and eye-focusing exercises. These exercises are tailored to each specific case to enhance connections between the eye and brain, improving the brain's image processing abilities. Amblyopia training software stimulates vision using specially polarised glasses, offering engaging and appealing training programmes for children.

"Amblyopia exercises involve simple eye exercises such as eye patching, focusing on near-far objects, activities like colouring and drawing, and high-precision games guided and supervised by a refractive specialist in the Ophthalmology & Refractive Surgery Department. These exercises are to be performed by children daily at home. Amblyopia exercises aim to improve eye flexibility and support the visual recovery process," explained Nguyen Truong Vinh Binh, Optometrist at FV Hospital.

FV's amblyopia exercise package is designed for approximately 10 sessions, each lasting 45-60 minutes. Children undergo one session per week (one-on-one) with an ophthalmology refractive specialist at the hospital, supplemented with additional self-practice sessions at home.

To mark the launch of amblyopia treatment services for children, FV Hospital is offering 50 free eye examinations for children under 15 years old who require screening and treatment for amblyopia. The offer includes refractive measurements and consultations with specialised Ophthalmology doctors.

Please refer to the detailed terms, conditions, and **Register Here**

To book an appointment with the Ophthalmology & Refractive Surgery Department, FV Hospital, please call: (028) 54 11 33 33 - Ext. 2000

To refer patient - Hotline: 0962 627 837 - Email: partners@fvhospital.com