New Step in Screening for Cervical Cancer

Update from the National Cancer Institute, Maryland, USA

Testing for the human papillomavirus (HPV) can help health providers and women decide what to do about an often perplexing issue: how to manage the mild abnormalities known as ASCUS (atypical squamous cells of undetermined significance) that often show up on Pap tests.

Up to now, women and their doctors have had no way to tell which ASCUS abnormalities will go away by themselves and which require immediate attention. New findings from a National Cancer Institute (NCI) study suggest that HPV testing is highly sensitive in identifying women with ASCUS who have precancer or cancer. The study appears in the February 21st issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

“HPV testing is a viable option to consider when deciding what to do about ASCUS,” says Diane Solomon, MD, NCI’s co-principal investigator for the ASCUS/LSIL (low-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions) Triage Study (ALTS). She also noted that repeat Pap testing or referral to colposcopy (examination with a magnifying instrument) remain options for women with an ASCUS Pap test result.

The HPV test identified about 96 percent of women with ASCUS who were found on colposcopy to have high-grade abnormalities. The study found that about 5-10 percent of women with ASCUS Pap results had underlying precancer or, rarely, cancer.

“One objective of the ALTS was to determine whether HPV testing could sort out which women with ASCUS Pap test results had underlying precancer or, rarely, cancer. “One objective of the ALTS was to determine whether HPV testing could sort out which women with ASCUS Pap test results would need immediate attention,” says NCI’s co-principal investigator for ALTS, Mark Schiffman, MD. “The findings suggest that women with a positive HPV test following an ASCUS result require further evaluation to find those who have a precancerous condition. For those with a negative HPV test, there is strong reassurance that a cancer precursor is not present.”

NCI began ALTS in 1996 to test three management strategies for ASCUS (repeat Pap testing, colposcopy and HPV triage). Because it is difficult to tell which women with ASCUS have serious underlying abnormalities, the topic has been a major issue in cervical cancer screening.

ALTS included about 5,000 women with ASCUS or LSILs, a slightly more definite abnormality. Cost-effectiveness and quality-of-life analyses for each of the ASCUS management options will follow when the ALTS long-term follow-up data are available.


International Women’s Health Symposium: Reducing Maternal Mortality

Liette Perron, Program Officer

Again this year, the SOGC will hold an International Women’s Health Symposium during its Annual Clinical Meeting (ACM). The all day event, to be held on Thursday, June 14, at the Delta Hotel in St. John’s, will provide a national and an international perspective of the efforts made to reduce maternal mortality worldwide.

The confirmed speakers include Dr. Jerker Liljestrand, Lead Health Specialist, The World Bank, and Dr. Lindsay Edouard, Senior Reproductive Health Officer, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It is hoped that Maria Minna, Minister for International Co-operation, will also be able to join us for the event.

For the first time, a number of clinical issues related to international obstetrics-gynaecology will also be addressed within the symposium. These include: HIV/AIDS in Pregnancy, Symphysiotomy: Is There a Role for It in Obstetrics?, Skilled Attendance at Birth and Cervical Cancer Screening in Low Resource Countries.

For more information about the day’s program, please refer to the ACM’s Preliminary Program which is also available on our Web site (www.sogc.org). A reminder, registration is required for the symposium.
# SOGC Clinical Practice Guidelines

**Denise Massey, Clinical Practice Guidelines Coordinator**

As of January 1st, 2001, we are no longer distributing copies of recent Clinical Practice Guidelines with the SOGC News. This is mainly due to the fact that all our Guidelines are now available on our Web site at [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org).

The process is quite simple: access our Web site and click onto “Welcome”, click onto “Clinical Practice Guidelines” in the blue banner, click onto “Browse our Library” in the third paragraph. This will take you to the guideline title page, listed in numerical order under each responsible Clinical Practice Committee. Find the guideline you want and click on the title; you will bring up the file and thus be able to print a copy. If you have any problems with this process, please contact Denise at dmassey@sogc.com.

Listed below are the guidelines published from January 2000 to April 2001. In next month’s issue of the SOGC News, we will list the guidelines published prior to January 2000.

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**CO** = Committee Opinion
CME Accreditation of the Best Practice and Research in Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology Program

S. Arulkumaran,
Professor of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, The University of Nottingham, UK, Visiting Professor, National University of Singapore

Best Practice and Research in Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology was formerly known as Bailliere’s Best Practice and Research in Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology. Six issues comprised of ten chapters are published annually, each of which is edited by a well known international Guest Editor. An internationally renowned editorial board of 21 members from Canada, USA, UK, Australia, Europe, Asia and Oceania select the important topics in the field and choose the Guest Editor.

Over the past two years, many changes have been made to make the issues more attractive and worthwhile to the reader. ‘Practice Points’ and ‘Research Agenda’ have been added to all chapters starting with Issue 3 (2000). Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and answers were introduced as of Issue 1 (2000). This has been quite popular and readers requested the possibility of using these for CME accreditation. Based on the request of the postgraduate Colleges, we have introduced MCQs for CME accreditation. Thus, MCQs are now included in each issue and the answers are printed in the following issue.

By participating in this educational exercise, SOGC members can obtain credits under Section 2 of the Royal College’s Maintenance of Certification Program (MAINCERT™). Other postgraduate bodies which have accepted this journal for CME accreditation include the Hong Kong College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists.

Issues published in 2000:
1. Emergencies in Obstetrics & Gynaecology
2. Urinary Incontinence
3. Chronic Pelvic Pain
4. Diagnosis of Genetic Defects in the Fetus
5. Implantation and Miscarriage
6. Angiogenesis of the Reproductive Tract

Issues for 2001:
1. Caesarean Section - Current Practice
2. Palliative Care in Obstetrics & Gynaecology
3. Controversies in Endometrial Cancer
4. Care of the Critically Ill Patient
5. Human Papillomavirus
6. Drugs in Pregnancy

Issues can be ordered from the publishers: Harcourt Publishers Ltd., Journals Marketing 32, Jamestown Road, London NW 1 0YT, UK E-mail: journals@harcourt.com Web site: www.harcourt-international.com/journals/beog

Helping you help your patients

Sylvie Séguin, Publications Assistant

Consistent with its mission to promote optimal women’s health, the SOGC produces booklets and other printed information, in both languages, on a variety of subjects. These are available to SOGC members at reduced prices, and the funds collected cover the costs of producing, printing, storing and distributing the materials. The SOGC does not make a profit from the sale of these materials.

Our “Let’s Talk About It!” series includes five booklets:
• Menopause: Let’s Talk About It!
• Osteoporosis: Let’s Talk About It!
• Heart Disease: Let’s Talk About It!
• Hormones & Breast Cancer: Let’s Talk About It!
• Drug Therapy for Menopause and Osteoporosis: Let’s Talk About It!

Each booklet describes its respective subject matter in plain language and includes risk factors, tips to reduce risks and to maintain good health and a list of available resources, both publications and organizations. They contain the latest developments with respect to new medications, as well as eye-opening statistics. These booklets are a valuable tool enabling women to take responsibility for their health.

A number of pregnancy-related resources are also available:
• Nausea and Vomiting During Pregnancy;
• HIV Testing in Pregnancy;
• Group B Streptococcus (GBS) Infection in Pregnancy, and;
• Bringing Baby Safely Into the World, a 5-brochure obstetrical package.

Providing women with the most up-to-date information so that they may make informed decisions concerning their health is a goal that is shared by physicians and the SOGC. Providing printed materials which your patients can take home is one way to empower them.

The booklets are available at a cost of $25 - $35 per pack of 50. To order your booklets on line, visit www.sogc.org, or call our toll-free publications line at 1-877-519-7999. An order form is enclosed in this issue for your convenience. Orders must be prepaid. Please allow three weeks for delivery.
The SOGC’s 57th ACM... The Countdown is On!

Isabelle Denis, Meeting Coordinator

The SOGC has invested a lot of time and effort to ensure that the 57th Annual Clinical Meeting from June 14 to 19 will be a smashing success. We are working closely with the Host Committee and many Newfoundlanders to offer you a wonderful experience in St. John’s!

The SOGC is pleased to announce that registration is well under way and many delegates are taking advantage of the early registration fees. As of March 30, 324 delegates had already registered. For those who haven’t yet done so, you have until May 25th to benefit from these special rates. If you still require a room after May 11th, you can call Tourism Newfoundland and Labrador at (709) 729-2830 or 1-800-563-NFLD or visit their Web site at www.gov.nf.ca/tourism to find out the room availability of other hotels in St. John’s.

Many social and leisure activities are popular with the participants, even close to the point of being sold out. Act quickly if you want to combine work with pleasure and discover Newfoundland’s treasures.

The SOGC staff and all their supporters are looking forward to meeting you in Newfoundland next month. See you there!

Millenium Technology Course

Marc-Yvon Arsenault, M.Sc., MD
SOGCNet Committee

The next Millenium Technology Course will be held June 15th, 2001, during the Annual Clinical Meeting of the SOGC in St. John’s. Here’s an exceptional opportunity for you to gather with your peers, along with a highly knowledgeable faculty, to discover and embrace new technology that influences your medical practice.

Topics that will be covered are Internet browsing, e-mail accounts, hot links, search engines and Medline and Cochrane databases. You will also learn how to make vivid PowerPoint presentations that include multimedia material, and how to access evidence-based information while you do your slideshows. Personal Digital Assistants (PDA’s or more commonly known as Palm held devices) and their use in the medical community will be introduced, and upcoming voice-recognition technology will be demonstrated.

Join us and register soon as the number of entries is limited to 40 participants. Please note that as this is an extremely popular course, a registration fee of $150 is required in order to guarantee your registration. This additional deposit will be reimbursed on site at the completion of the course. Lunch and transportation to and from the Memorial University Campus will be provided. The ratio of faculty to participants will be 1 to 4-5, and each participant will have his own computer station with a live Internet connection with necessary software installed.

For more information on this or any other program offered at the ACM, please visit our Web site at www.sogc.org.

Come surf the summer icebergs with us!
The 2001 West/Central CME Meeting
a great success!

Carole Brault, Program Officer and
Isabelle Denis, Meeting Coordinator

The West/Central CME Meeting that was held from March 22-24, 2001 at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel received very positive comments from participants, faculty and sponsors, specifically in terms of the scientific program and the overall organization of the event.

For the first time this year, the SOGC used a preferred supplier for all its audio-visual needs. We received a lot of positive feedback and everyone was happy to have audio-visual technicians on site. The SOGC is looking forward to continued collaboration with Avant-Garde Video Inc. over the next three years.

Despite the fact that the West/Central region didn’t receive much snow this year, downhill skiing conditions were good at Lake Louise. Moreover, those who decided to combine work with pleasure had a chance to browse among the various boutiques in the village of Banff, go to the Hot Springs or relax in the hotel’s outdoor heated pool. Others seized the opportunity to pamper themselves at the Solace Spa, taste Alberta’s beef or simply admire the scenic beauty of the Canadian Rockies.

See you next year!

ICME Tennis Tournament Winners

Charmaine Roye, Organizing Committee

The Annual SOGC ICME Tennis Tournament was held in sunny Costa Rica in early March during the 14th International CME Program. Many thanks to Duchesnay Inc. for kindly providing trophies for the winners in all categories and for their unflagging support of the annual tournament since its inception almost a decade ago.

In men’s doubles, Eric Bisson and John The teamed up to defeat Mike Bow and Ferd Pauls in an exciting match requiring a tie-breaker to determine the winner. Brantford’s Charmaine Roye and Kelly Anderson, a pediatrician from Edmonton, won the women’s doubles title over finalists Sally Jorgenson from Bridgewater, NS and Laura Chamberlain from Winchester, Kentucky. Mixed doubles champions were Kelly Anderson and Michael Bow from Edmonton over Laura and Dick Chamberlain from Kentucky.

The women’s singles final was an all-Ontario event, won by Charmaine Roye over Sharon O’Brien. Michael Bow collected his second trophy of the tournament by winning the men’s singles in a heated match over Eduardo Berger from Ottawa.

Thanks are extended to the organizing team of Bow, Pauls and Roye and to all the players who were enthusiastic in their participation and cooperated with a tight schedule which often competed against the many other activities in Costa Rica.

Thank you to the International and West/Central CME Program Sponsors

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NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

9th Annual Symposium: New Developments in Prenatal Diagnosis and Medical Genetics
May 16, 2001, Mount Sinai Hospital
600 University Avenue, Toronto, ON
Credits: MAIN PRO 1-M1 credits by the CFPC, Maintenance of Certification Program of the RCPSC, Category I credits of AMA
For information and registration: Continuing Education, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
Toronto, ON M5S 3E2
Tel: (416) 978-2719
Fax: (416) 971-2200
E-mail: kristin.parsonson@utoronto.ca
Website: www.cme.utoronto.ca

North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology (NASPAG) Annual Clinical Meeting
Delta Chelsea Inn, Toronto, ON
May 18-20, 2001
Information: www.naspag.org

Advances in Fetal & Perinatal Cardiology
25-26 May, 2001
The Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto
Information: Diane Pettai,
Tel.: (416) 813-7850
Fax: (416) 813-7880
E-mail: diane.pettai@sickkids.on.ca
Website: www.sickkids.on.ca/fetalcentre/AdvancesInFetalPerinatalCardiology.asp

3rd International Meeting on Recent Advances in Gynaecological Surgery (IMRAGS)
Church House, Conference Centre
Westminster, London, UK
May 30 & 31, 2001
Info: IMRAGS Secretariat
Tel: +44(0)20 8661 0877
Fax: +44(0)20 8661 9036
Email: info@conforg.com

World Congress of Perinatal Medicine
September 17 to 23, 2001
Barcelona, Spain

13th World Congress: International Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy
June 2-5, 2002
Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto
For Information and Call for Papers: c/o Continuing Education, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
150 College Street, Suite 121
Toronto, ON M5S 3E2
Telephone: (416) 978-2719
Fax: (416) 971-2200
E-mail: kristin.parsonson@utoronto.ca
Web page: www.cme.utoronto.ca/PDF/ISSH.Pdf

Looking for a family vacation spot? Moncton is the place to be! History, amusement parks, breathtaking scenery ... Moncton has it all!

Moncton, September 23-24, 2001
Best Western, Crystal Palace

Take your foot off the brake and be amazed as your vehicle rolls uphill! Magnetic Hill is Canada’s third most visited natural attraction and is adjacent to the Magnetic Hill Zoo.

Crystal Palace offers you an indoor roller coaster, go-carts, miniature golf, Virtual Reality, bumper boats, 40 exhibit Science Centre, Lazer Tag, and so much more!

Golf enthusiasts can enjoy a round or two at one, or all, of Moncton’s 7, 18-hole golf courses. (Is there a Jack Nicholas or Tiger Woods in you?)

Moncton has a rich history dating back to 1730. Visit the many museums, galleries, and centers which reflect Moncton’s unique and varied heritage.

And for outdoor aficionados, the Dobson Trail provides an opportunity for you to explore the wonders of the New Brunswick wilderness.

The Society gratefully acknowledges the generous support of 3M Canada, Duchesnay Inc., Ferring Inc., Pharmacia Canada Inc., Tyco Healthcare/Nellcor, and Wyeth-Ayerst Canada Inc.

To register for ALARM, contact Correena Z. Snook, ALARM Coordinator at tel: 613-730-4192, ext. 247 or e-mail: csnook@sogc.com
Getting Your Practice Online

Dean McNeill, MD Management

We all know the doctors of the future. They have become a convention in science fiction films—carrying little gadgets that provide them with all the information they need, serve as communication devices, and heal almost any injury without even breaking the skin.

So how do we measure up in the year 2001? Well, we have yet to achieve the latter goal, but the first two are no longer solely in the realm of fiction.

The heart of your information centre, of course, is the office computer system. It doesn’t need to be glamorous to be highly useful and efficient. A small medical practice can easily rely on a single desktop PC, which today can pack so much power that you will likely not have to upgrade for a long time. The driving force behind computer upgrades is often either a desire for more speed or a need to keep your hardware compatible with your favourite office or medical applications. Neither of these reasons become a necessity as quickly as the commercials would have you believe.

Medium-to-large practices could possibly benefit from having either more than one PC, or a slightly more complex setup, with one “server” and a number of “clients”. This technobabble simply means you’ve got one central PC (the same physical size as your average PC) and several other PCs hooked up to it to form a network. All clients can then share information with each other, as well as with a database kept on the central server. This system can be very useful in a practice that has more than one person running the reception desk, and where multiple doctors need to share parts of the database.

Important software for a medical practice includes the same basic applications needed by any business, such as word processing, spreadsheet/database applications, task managers, and basic accounting software. Office applications are often packaged together, making them easy to purchase and set up. Good office software is essential—but boring. Let’s get into the fun stuff.

The office system is your mothership: an extremely powerful place to store information and, through the Internet, search for information in the wide world of cyberspace. But you wouldn’t want to lug it around from room to room, and that’s where the sci-fi gadgets come in.

Hand-held computers are becoming increasingly popular among doctors. In a busy practice, owning a hand-held PC is like buying your first microwave oven. You remember living life quite well beforehand, but now that you have one, you wonder how you ever got along without it.

Hand-holds are not only portable, but are now available with wireless technology so you can access your email and Hand-held-friendly sites on the Web. In other words, it’s a communication device. But there’s more to it than that.

Medical software is available that is specifically designed for these palm PCs. Applications that keep track of patients, such as PatientKeeper (www.patientkeeper.com) and Patient Tracker (www.handheldmed.com) can be great for managing patient information. Dosage calculators are also quite popular, and there is also a fair amount of storage for other reference materials on palm PCs. Hand-holds can be compatible with your office PC, allowing you to access your databases as well, although the amount of information you can store is obviously much more limited than on a desktop PC.

Watch for further articles on the latest technology for doctors in upcoming issues of the SOGC News. In the meantime, feel free to boldly go where the medical technology awaits you—the local computer store. You may find many of your colleagues already there.

Members’ Corner:

Dr. Tommaso Falcone, MD was recently appointed Professor & Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

Dr. Falcone was a graduate of McGill University medical school. He was on staff at the Royal Victoria Hospital, McGill University until 1994. He moved to the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in 1995 as Director of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. Congratulations Dr. Falcone, and best wishes!

OB/GYN WANTED

Kootenay Lake Regional Hospital, Nelson, British Columbia, is accepting applications from Canadian trained and registered Fellowship Ob/Gyn to provide services to a population of 45,000+.

One to two operating days/week and a busy referral practice.

Exceptional lifestyle opportunity in an area described as a “recreational playground.” The city of Nelson is located on Kootenay Lake in the Selkirk Mountains in southeastern BC and is acknowledged as an arts and cultural centre. Selected as Canada’s “Best Small Ski Town,” and the “Best Small Arts Community in North America.”

Excellent schools, community college, and recreational programming.


To discuss this practice opportunity, please contact: Miriam Ramsden, Executive Assistant, Medical Recruitment / Selection Committee, Kootenay Lake Regional Hospital, #402, 3 View, Nelson, BC, CANADA V1L 2V1.

Fax: 250-354-2320; Email: miriam.ramsden@nahc.hnet.bc.ca

SOGC News is produced and published by the SOGC through an educational grant from Berlex Canada Inc.
Foundation News

By Robyn Harris, Executive Director

RESIDENT RESEARCH AWARDS
The Foundation is proud to announce the first recipients of the award for the best resident research project at the 16 medical schools across Canada. Dr. Stephanie Fisher of Queen’s University, Dr. Sarah Healey of Memorial University of Newfoundland, Dr. Mangi Tauh of the University of Saskatchewan, and Dr. Jaco Scheeres of the University of Manitoba have all received a $200 award for their continuing education. We will announce other recipients, as annual research days take place across Canada.

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR SUPPORT...
It is with sincere gratitude that the Foundation acknowledges the following donors of 2000.

Supporting research for the health of women.

The SOGC News is published on a monthly basis. Comments and contributions are welcome and should be forwarded to:

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AND THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING UNIVERSITIES THAT HAVE SUPPORTED THE FOUNDATION’S GRANTS PROGRAM FOR THE 2001 COMPETITION.

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