

NEUROPATHIC PAIN



NEWSLETTER of the IASP Special Interest Group on Neuropathic Pain

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A Message from the Chair

Dear Colleague,

This newsletter is to introduce you to the activities of NeuPSIG, the Special Interest Group on Neuropathic Pain, founded in 2002 to advance the understanding of mechanisms, assessment, prevention and treatment of this common pain.

More specifically, the aims and objectives of the SIG are:

- Collaboration for basic and clinical research
- The study of the underlying mechanisms of neuropathic pain
- The exchange of information and experience about the assessment and treatment of neuropathic pain
- The identification and implementation of programs to prevent the development of neuropathic pain
- Furthering the educational objectives of the SIG via international meetings, an annual symposium, workshops at the IASP World Congress on Pain[®], Congress satellite meetings, a newsletter and the IASP Web site.

With a membership of nearly 600, NeuPSIG forms a unique international forum for promotion of ideas, discussion and action. If you are not a member, join now. If you are a member, use this as an opportunity to urge a colleague to join! You can join by contacting the IASP main office directly. Email: iaspdesk@iasp-pain.org.

Turo Nurmikko, MD, Chair, NeuPSIG

Confirmation of Educational Initiatives for 2004

The SIG is well advanced in preparations for two major meetings on neuropathic pain. In the first part of the newsletter, Dr. Rolf-Detlef Treede, Chair of the Organizing Committee, tells us about arrangements for the Madrid meeting.

Neuropathic Pain - Changing Paradigms in Diagnosis and Treatment May 13-16, 2004, Madrid, Spain

The SIG has been co-sponsors of the last couple of USA-based meetings run by our Vice-Chair Dr. Bob Dworkin. These meetings have been highly successful but the Management Committee feels it is important to ensure that an educational message about recent advances in all aspects of neuropathic pain is brought to the widest possible audience. Our next meeting will be held in a European venue and we are fortunate to have the experienced organisers Kenes as our partners in arranging this major educational event. The arrangements are now virtually complete, and in this issue of the newsletter, the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee, Dr. Rolf-Detlef Treede, gives us an overview. Rolf-Detlef writes:

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In the last newsletter you found the first announcement of NeuPSIG's international congress on Neuropathic Pain in Madrid (May 13-16, 2004). The aim of this congress is to gather basic scientists, clinical scientists, and practicing clinicians from all disciplines that are engaged in the care for patients who suffer from neuropathic pain. With great pleasure I can inform you that planning for this meeting proceeds rapidly and that NeuPSIG will offer an exciting conference, both for its members and for other clinicians and researchers with an interest in neuropathic pain. Needless to say Madrid, the capital of Spain, is also an ideal place to relax after the science, discuss matters with your colleagues and simply enjoy yourself. Madrid boasts many great monuments and a splendid downtown area dating back to the Habsburg Empire as well as the world-renowned Prado Museum. Madrid is not just a cultural destination; it is also a lively and sophisticated city offering a vast range of pubs, cafes, fine restaurants and clubs open late into the night and an ideal base to see more of the many wonders of Spain should you wish to extend your stay.

SIG on Neuropathic Pain – January 2004

We have 14 outstanding speakers and chairs for plenary sessions on “Diagnosis and Treatment”, “Diseases and Mechanisms”, and “News and Views”. The Scientific Program Committee has completed the second major pillar of our program, the list of Topical Workshops. These have been selected from proposals entered through the conference website (www.kenes.com/neuropathic). With Kenes International, NeuPSIG has found a conference organizer of highest professional standards, which many of you know from EFIC meetings or conferences in Neurology. Support from industry testifies that treatment of patients with neuropathic pain is considered a growing market, which in turn means that industry is investing heavily into the development of more efficient treatments for formerly “intractable” neuropathic pain syndromes. You will have the opportunity to meet representatives from pharmaceutical companies and device manufacturers in the industry exhibits, and each conference day will also feature industry sponsored symposia. We expect that representatives of regulatory agencies (FDA, EMEA) may also be present at this meeting, because the setting of guidelines for the approval of drugs for the treatment of neuropathic pain is one of the hottest issues in pain therapy. I would like to end by mentioning the third major pillar of our scientific program, the posters for which abstracts may be entered very comfortably via the conference website (www.kenes.com/neuropathic) until January 1, 2004. The poster presentations are the real driving force behind the scientific and clinical progress in our field. Therefore, I hope to see many of you in Madrid at your posters, presenting your latest findings from animal research, human experimental studies, clinical trials or clinical observations.

I look forward to welcoming you to Madrid and to a successful conference.

Rolf-Detlef Treede, MD, Chair, Scientific Program Committee

573 IASP members have joined NeuPSIG so far and this meeting will bring to those attending the latest and most up-to-date information from the best sources. It will be an important milestone for basic scientists, clinical scientists and practicing clinicians from all disciplines with an interest in furthering the understanding and care of patients with neuropathic pain. For more information visit the conference website at <http://www.kenes.com/neuropathic/>

Satellite Meeting of the 11th World Congress on Pain August 17 - 20, 2005, Uluru, Australia

The 2005 IASP World Congress on Pain in Sydney will be the trip of a lifetime for many SIG members. To make it even more memorable the SIG has made ambitious plans to hold a satellite meeting at Uluru (formerly known as Ayres Rock).

Chairman of the Scientific Program Committee Allen Hord has come up with a format that will have a packed program featuring shorter (30 minute) lectures that will permit maximum educational material to be presented in the short time available. Once again the emphasis is on providing a program that will appeal to both clinicians and to those in other disciplines. The program is to be structured to permit the introduction of “hot” topics that may emerge between then and now.

Despite the intensity of the program, there will still be sufficient time to allow registrants and their partners to enjoy the unique wonders of this Natural and Cultural World Heritage Site. Uluru is situated in central Australia in southwest Northern Territory. Alice Springs is 335km to the northwest. Added to the World Heritage Site list in 1987, Uluru is one of the biggest monoliths in the world and rises approximately 340m above the desert to reach 862.5m above sea level.

August is winter at Uluru and the main time for visiting this area. Mean daily minimum and maximum temperatures are 4°C and 20°C respectively, although frosts have been reported! The park, and in particular the Uluru monolith, is one of several equally important and interconnected centres of local and religious significance for the Aborigine peoples. The timing of the meeting has been coordinated to allow attendees to get back to Sydney in plenty of time to book into their hotels before the Refresher Course and the start of the 11th World Congress on Pain.

*Make a note of the dates of the Madrid and Uluru meetings:
Madrid, May 13-16, 2004 and Uluru, August 17-20, 2005*

New NeuPSIG Web Site Goes Online -- www.neupsig.org

The management committee decided to create a dedicated homepage for NeuPSIG. This initiative was started to foster a timely information transfer between the management committee, the growing number of SIG members and, importantly, to reach a worldwide audience interested in neuropathic pain. An easy click will allow basic information on committees and meetings. A map of the world and a list of countries and specialities will act as a guide to all members of NeuPSIG who can then be identified and located *via* the “Members Only Page” of IASP.

Organising the list of members in country-order will allow bookmarks for particular services or organizations on neuropathic pain in your country. For example, the German Neuropathic Pain Network is listed in the current version.

A special *NEWS* section will enable rapid availability of important information or can be used to gather feedback from members and readers on emerging topics. In another section, the SIG newsletters can be downloaded. This will allow a distribution of all issues over the borders of SIG and IASP.

Major aims and objectives of NeuPSIG are the exchange of information and experience about the assessment and treatment of neuropathic pain, and the identification as well as the implementation of programs to prevent the development of neuropathic pain. Therefore, the subheadings *Continuing Education, Guidelines and Evidence-Based Medicine* have been deliberately introduced. There is strong belief that these sections of the Web site are of particular importance to further the reputation of NeuPSIG as a key-player in the management of neuropathic pain, by supporting national needs and through international collaboration. This section will also include global resources such as the *IASP Core Curriculum for Professional Education of Pain* or *The Oxford Pain Internet Site on “Evidence based thinking about health care”*.

The success of the Web site to accomplish these goals will depend on the enthusiastic support of all members and those who want to promote the subject of neuropathic pain. Any comments about content will be most welcome! Send these to the NeuPSIG secretary, Dr. Ed Charlton (jec@neupsig.org). He is looking forward to receiving your numerous suggestions!

Thomas R. Tölle, Member of NeuPSIG

Have a look at www.neupsig.org!

**7th International Conference on
Mechanisms and Treatment of Neuropathic Pain
November 4-6, 2004, Bermuda
Sponsored by the University of Rochester and NeuPSIG
For information, see www.neupsig.org**
