EISENHOWER NEUROSCIENCES CONFERENCE INTRODUCES SPECT-CT

Eisenhower Neurosurgeon Shahin Etebar, MD, Medical Director, Eisenhower Neuroscience Institute, and conference Co-Chair, presenting the “Surgical Management of Cervical Spondylosis and Spondylotic Myelopathy.”

More than 150 primary care physicians and nurses from the surrounding area attended the First Annual Eisenhower Neurosciences Update for Primary Care Physicians held March 7, 2009, at the Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage. Coinciding with the recent opening of the Eisenhower Neuroscience Institute in January, the conference introduced the primary care community to the latest advances in neurosurgery, neurodiagnostics and therapeutics. The day-long conference featured an esteemed panel of physicians from Eisenhower Medical Center, The Betty Ford Center at Eisenhower and the University of Arkansas for Medical Science.

“Over the last two decades, there have been numerous technological and scientific advances in the care of neurological disorders,” says Shahin Etebar, MD, Medical Director, Eisenhower Neuroscience Institute, who co-chaired the event with Eisenhower Medical Center Neurologist Bishoy Labib, MD. “Innovations such as microsurgery, radiosurgery, digital neuroimaging, endovascular surgery, and minimallyinvasive brain and spinal surgery have led to higher levels of therapeutic effectiveness, improved outcomes and patient satisfaction. Eisenhower Medical Center has been a regional leader in acquiring and advancing the diagnostic therapeutic tools for the treatment of neurological disorders.”

“People are living longer, and primary care physicians are seeing increasingly more aging patients with a variety of degenerative spine and brain disorders, tumors and cerebrovascular diseases,” Etebar explains. “It is important to educate primary care physicians in the new treatment and diagnostic options that are now available. The better and more accurate diagnosis they can make, the better treatment plan they can develop for their patients.”

The conference’s experienced and diverse faculty discussed the many challenges encountered in daily practices, including the surgical management of aging spinal disorder, ischemic and embolic stroke, neurogenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease, normal pressure hydrocephalus, multiple sclerosis, Guillain-Barré syndrome and emerging surgical techniques and technologies for central nervous system tumors.

A conference highlight was the introduction of SPECT-CT scanning technology by Eisenhower Medical Center’s Radiologist M. James Cohn, MD. “Eisenhower Medical Center is one of the first to use this technology and to use it routinely for the evaluation of spinal disorders,” says Dr. Etebar. “We have experience with well over 1,200 patients since we began using the SPECT-CT technology in May 2004. It is extremely helpful in diagnosing the source of back and neck pain so we can treat it more effectively.”

Based on the success of this first conference, the conference planning committee is already in the planning stages for its second conference. “The enthusiasm with which this conference was received was exceptional,” says Dr. Etebar. “The evaluations we received about the conference were superb, and we are definitely planning to make this an annual event.”

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