With an entertaining mix of performance and pageantry, the ninth edition of EuroPerio was officially opened on Wednesday at the RAI Amsterdam Convention Centre. A visually arresting dance performance and laser light show befitting the host city’s exuberant nature kicked things off, and a surprising twist gave attendees a memorable story to relay.

In keeping with EuroPerio9’s emphasis on providing something new for attendees, the opening dance sequence distinguished this ceremony from any other. After the initial dancers had performed, a single figure clad in a black bodysuit and fedora took to centre stage, moving energetically and in unison with a projected-light silhouette. As a booming voice asked the audience to welcome Dr Michèle Reners, chair of the EuroPerio9 organising committee, the dancer stepped out of the bodysuit to reveal that it had been Reners herself. To thunderous applause, she welcomed attendees and shared with them the long journey to Amsterdam, a journey made possible by a talented team. Praising the presenters the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) had attracted to EuroPerio9, she stated, “The secret to success is quality speakers”.

In addition to Reners and Chapple, EFP President Prof. Dr Anton Sculean addressed visitors to the congress, as did several other members of the EFP Executive Committee.

After this round of introductions, the full and associate member societies of the EFP were invited onstage to parade their national flags in front of the audience. Each nation was warmly greeted, with especially loud cheers heard for Italy, Spain and the host country, the Netherlands.

With 134 expert speakers and 308 moderated abstract and poster presentations scheduled over the four days of EuroPerio9, there is plenty of opportunity for visitors to hear about the latest information regarding the fields of periodontics and dental implantology. In addition, many of the industry’s leading companies are present and showcasing their dental solutions at the event. Wednesday’s Opening Press Conference, which preceded the welcome ceremony, gave the audience an overview of the event, background information on the EFP, and facts and figures on periodontal disease. Prof. Søren Jepsen, EuroPerio9 Scientific Chair and past EFP President, outlined this edition’s new session formats and expanded scientific programme. Additionally, Sculean emphasised this year’s focus on periodontal health as an integral part of general health and well-being which was completed by Prof. Bruno Loos’, Specialist and EFP Committee member, following take-home message: “Gingivae and the underlying bone structure are the basis not only for a healthy dentition, crowns or bridges, but also for speech, appearance, your smile, and overall well-being. In a lot of countries, periodontal treatment is not part of the basic health insurance package. As such, periodontal disease needs to be recognised as a disease just like all other chronic inflammatory diseases.”

EFP welcomes visitors to EuroPerio9 in style

10,000 participants are expected to attend the four-day event filled with learning and networking opportunities.

Prof. Iain Chapple, Secretary General of the EFP, spoke to the crowd next and spoke of how EuroPerio has continued to grow since its early days. “We are happy to welcome more than 10,000 attendees to EuroPerio9,” he said, declaring it to be a record turnout for the event.

Clinical
Dr Karl-Ludwig Ackermann showcases a new restoration concept using LOCATOR F-Tx with no screws and no cement. ➤ page 6

Products in focus
The new Planmeca CALM algorithm for correcting patient movement in CBCT images is “the real deal”. ➤ page 16

Travel
There is lots to do and see in Amsterdam. Enjoy some tips on the best museums, food and more in the Dutch capital. ➤ page 22

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MADE IN GERMANY
It is the biggest and most important meeting in the fields of periodontology and implant dentistry worldwide—Part 1

An interview with Prof. Dr. Anton Sculean, President of the European Federation of Periodontology.

 Held once every three years by the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP), EuroPerio brings together thousands of dental professionals from around the world for one of the influential dental meetings in the world. EuroPerio features a range of new events and presentations. In the first part of this interview with Prof. Dr. Anton Sculean, President of the EFP, today international spoke about what visitors can expect to gain from attending EuroPerio9.

How can dental professionals benefit from attending EuroPerio9?

Simply put, it’s the biggest and most important meeting in the fields of periodontology and implant dentistry worldwide. EuroPerio will provide a wealth of knowledge in all aspects of these two specialties for attendees, highlighting the most recent innovations in diagnosis, pathogenesis, non-surgical and reconstructive surgical approaches, as well as maintenance and patient management. It aims to provide not just for the specialist but also for the general practitioner and dental hygienist solid, evidence-based knowledge on how they can implement these approaches and treatments in their daily practices. Clearly, all dental professionals can gain a lot from coming to EuroPerio9.

One of the strategies for EuroPerio9 is to attract younger dental professionals. What does the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) hope to achieve through this?

Well, first of all, we have new and different types of sessions for EuroPerio9. We now have not only sessions that are concerned with studies and presentations from experts, but also sessions that focus on practical elements and clinical concepts. In addition to that, we had the first EFP Graduate-Alumni-Symposium, which was scheduled for Wednesday, 20 June. This session used a novel format, Perio Talks, chaired by Prof. Moshe Goldstein and Dr. France Lambert, both from the EFP Postgraduate Committee, along with President-elect Dr. Filippo Greziani, official coordinator of EFP Alumni, Perio Talks featured eight speakers sharing their own unique journeys in periodontology. Hailing from countries as disparate as Ireland and Israel, the presenters ranged in experience from a knowledgeable professor to a first-year student. Regardless of these differences, their stories were of a uniformly high quality and provided a rapt audience with wisdom about both periodontology and making significant life choices.

Having undergone a special training session in Vienna in Austria earlier in the year on talking without notes, the presenters spoke with confidence for 10–12 minutes each. Prof. Eli Machanit, Director of the School of Graduate Dentistry of the Rambam Health Care Campus in Haifa in Israel, encouraged young attendees to pursue an academic career in periodontology, while Dr. Cavid Ahmedbeyli detailed his experiences in forming PERIODAZ, Azerbaijan’s national society for periodontology, in 2012 and helping it become an EFP associate member society by 2017.

Perio Talks was the first event to be held by EFP Alumni, an initiative that commenced in 2017 with the goal of connecting students and teachers in periodontology. There are currently 16 EFP-accredited postgraduate university programmes in periodontology today, with 446 EFP-certified graduates from over 50 countries. According to Dr. Michele Deferrari, chair of the EuroPerio9 organizing committee, only 40 per cent of the conference’s attendees are under the age of 35.

First EFP Graduate-Alumni-Symposium proves to be a hit

When the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) was officially formed in Amsterdam in 1991, one of its primary goals was to increase awareness of the importance of periodontal health through research and education, among other avenues. Twenty-seven years later, Amsterdam is host to EuroPerio9, and Wednesday saw the EFP’s emphasis on education pay dividends with the successful debut of Perio Talks, the first EFP Graduate-Alumni-Symposium.

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Dr Francis Hughes, Professor of Periodontology at King’s College London in the UK, served as chair of the organising committee of EuroPerio8, held in London in 2015. Three years later, he is part of the EFP Congress Task Force, advising on all matters relating to EFP congresses, ranging from possible future venues to scientific meeting possibilities. Today international spoke with him about EuroPerio’s successful development, as well as his own expectations of this year’s edition.

You headed EuroPerio8’s organising committee three years ago. How would you say this year’s event ties in with the one in London?

EuroPerio8 have been a great success over the years, and the number of attendees has grown immensely. In London, we attracted almost 10,000 people from 106 countries, and registrations for EuroPerio9 have even surpassed that. As such, EuroPerio9 is building on the great success and popularity of previous meetings. The winning formula has evolved over the years, and this year we have some new innovations, such as live surgery sessions, nightmare case sessions and a general attempt to encourage discussion in all sessions. We have, over time, also got much better at planning and projecting our messages from the EFP. Finally, with our core professional conference organizers Mondial, we have got pretty slick at running a smooth and enjoyable show where the logistics work and people can enjoy themselves and catch up with the latest techniques, research and methodologies.

You are participating in a session at EuroPerio9 on the role of genetics in periodontitis. What would you like listeners to take from this session?

I am chairing this session. I am not by any means a geneticist, but I am an enthusiastic amateur when it comes to periodontal genetics. Thus, I hope that having a clinician as chair will help to make the session as accessible and relevant as possible. Genetic factors are some of the most important factors that determine susceptibility to periodontitis, but the precise mechanisms are not well understood. The scientific potential of current studies to unravel these factors is enormous, but there are also some important pitfalls to avoid. I hope that listeners will be able to understand the state-of-the-art in this research area, but also better understand the potential clinical relevance of these studies in the future.

How can dental professionals benefit from attending EuroPerio9?

There is something for all dental professionals at EuroPerio9. The size of the meeting and holding the meeting only once every three years means that we are able to put on a fresh and comprehensive scientific programme that brings together top expert speakers in all topics relating to periodontology and implant dentistry. So, there is much to go to if you are a specialist or generalist, practitioner or academic, dentist or hygienist. In truth, the biggest challenge for the attendee is deciding on what to go to and what not to.

What are some things at the event you are looking forward to personally?

I am looking forward to the session I am chairing on genetics, where I have two great speakers on this topic. There are lots of both practical and academic sessions that I am really eager to see—for example, the debate on the use of antibiotics in periodontology. But one of the main things I’m looking forward to is catching up with many old friends, colleagues and old students of mine who are scattered all around the world.
A meta-analysis presented at EuroPerio9 has found that periodontal disease and coronary artery disease (CAD) share a common genetic basis. A variant in the promoter region (promoters initiate gene transcription) of the VAMP8 gene was significantly more frequent in CAD and periodontitis cases than in healthy controls, indicating the involvement of this gene in the aetiology of both diseases. According to the researchers, VAMP8 is involved in the import and export of molecules and other substances into and out of cells. Knowledge of the shared genetic basis helps scientists to understand the molecular mechanisms that underlie the diseases and predispose people to developing them, and to guide therapy, identification and preventative care in risk groups before the disease manifests.

Strong evidence of the association between CAD and periodontal disease has already been established. Both are among the most common diseases, are frequently diagnosed together and have common risk factors, such as smoking and diabetes. Both are characterised by a chronic inflammatory process, but independent of those shared risk factors, previous studies had suggested a few shared genetic variants.

“The identification of the shared genetic susceptibility factors will pinpoint relevant molecular pathways for the disease. This knowledge will yield very specific therapeutic targets for precision medicine. We believed that, given the localised nature of periodontitis, which is confined to the oral cavity, there would be a small variety of different pathways that had the potential to contribute to both diseases,” explained lead author Prof. Arne S. Schäfer, from the department of periodontics and synoptic dentistry at the Charité—Universitätsmedizin Berlin in Germany.

Schäfer said that it is important to understand that CAD and periodontal disease are not linked to lifestyle factors alone. “There are probably risk groups which have a genetic predisposition in response to certain factors. This also means that periodontitis does not increase the risk for CAD in general or vice versa. Nevertheless, a group of individuals may share a genetic predisposition, involving the VAMP8 function, which increases the risk for both diseases.”

Regarding a general message for the public, he added: “The most efficient way to prevent the onset of both heart and periodontal diseases is to quit smoking and live healthily.”

* Prof. Arne S. Schäfer

Periodontal disease and coronary artery disease share genetic basis

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