



EFCS
European Federation of
Cytology Societies

The EFCS Newsletter



Issue 3/2021



EFCS NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends and Colleagues

The summer of 2021 has just arrived, and we are still enduring our battle against the COVID19 pandemic. Although we haven't yet returned to our "normal" lives, it is heartwarming to see all the progresses we have made in just over 1 year.

This current issue of our EFCS Newsletter is meant to show you a brief testimony on the success of yet another edition of the EFCS Annual Tutorial, an exciting letter from the Co-Presidents of the 21st ICC to be held in Baltimore USA, and our usual and always interesting case challenges. In the end, we prepared an amazing (yet brief!) journey through the history of our federation.

We hope you find as much pleasure in reading this Newsletter, as we do in preparing it for you. Your feedback is always of great importance, so please do not forget to send it to us via email (residentsyoung@efcs.eu). Sooner, rather than later, you can also reach us through our brand-new Twitter accounts! Stay tuned!

Ricardo Veiga, MD
EFCS Residents and Young Pathologists Committee

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**For more information about the
EFCS, visit our website!**

<https://www.efcs.eu/>



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ECC 2021 
3-6 October | Wrocław, Poland
43RD EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF CYTOLOGY

For more information about this, please visit
<https://cytology2021.eu/>



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Brief Report on the 12th Annual EFCS Tutorial

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 12th annual EFCS Tutorial scheduled on June 7th-11th 2021 in Trieste had to be canceled. Instead, a digital edition was held on June 10th-11th. This digital edition of the annual tutorial was based on the use of virtual slides which were uploaded on the Eurocytology site and made available in advance to the participants who could study the cases before the live event. This included short lectures followed by the live discussion of the virtual cases, while participants could ask questions in real-time via chat. The event was chaired by Giovanni Negri and co-chaired by Arrigo Capitanio.

Nine tutors from Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, Italy, Norway, France, Croatia, and Finland were involved in the lectures, which included eleven different topics among urine, breast, thyroid, pancreatic, serous effusions, salivary gland, soft tissue and gynecological cytology.

One hundred and twenty-two participants (cytotechnologists, residents, biologists and pathologists) coming from 24 different European and extra-European countries took part in the courses. Up to 11000 connections before the live event were recorded by the Eurocytology servers, which did their job flawlessly also during the live sessions.

The participants' feedback is still being collected, early commentaries via chat have been already highly positive. One of the most asked features was keeping the slides and lectures online for some time after the event. In fact, slides and lectures will be made available to the participants at least for three weeks after the tutorial.

Overall, despite the forced virtualization, it was another successful EFCS annual tutorial, in the best tradition of these events. We are already working on the next annual tutorial, scheduled in 2022, and we will try to resume the classic tutorial formulation based on microscopy work. However, encouraged by the success of this digital edition, we are already planning further digital events which will allow broader participation and a peek into the future of digital cytology.

Giovanni Negri

EFCS Educational Committee, Tutorials



For more information, please visit
<https://www.efcs.eu/12th-annual-efcs-tutorial/>

12th Annual EFCS Tutorial



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Message from the Co-Presidents of the 21st International Congress of Cytology (ICC)

The 21st International Congress of Cytology: Exploring Next-Generation Cytology

The International Academy of Cytology (IAC) is joining with the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) to host the 21st International Congress of Cytology (ICC) during the ASC's 70th Annual Scientific Meeting from November 14-19, 2022, at the Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor, Baltimore, Maryland, USA. The Congress theme is "Next-Generation Cytology", which will be explored throughout the scientific program with expert speakers from around the world presenting numerous workshops, interactive microscopy sessions and joint program lectures.

The IAC and ASC are very proud that this prestigious event will take place in Baltimore, as it has been 48 years since the International Congress has been hosted in the USA. Baltimore has a rich historic heritage, with a long history as an important seaport. Today, this harbor area offers shops, upscale crab shacks and attractions like the Civil War-era warship, the USS Constellation, and the National Aquarium, showcasing thousands of marine creatures. Baltimore is centrally located on the east coast of the USA along the Amtrak corridor, where you can catch a train to Washington DC, Philadelphia and New York City. The International Congress of Cytology will bring together experts from around the world to deliver dozens of educational courses, platform and posters presentations, and invited guest lecturers on specialized topics in cytopathology.

Our theme of "New-Generation Cytology!" could not be a more suitable backdrop for our time together. On behalf of the IAC and ASC, we look forward to reuniting with old friends, forging new relationships, strengthening existing ties, robust learning, and recognizing individuals who have contributed to our success.

For more information on the Congress, please contact the American Society of Cytopathology at asc@cytopathology.org.

Sincerely

Martha Pitman
Fernando Schmitt

Co-Presidents of the 21st International Congress of Cytology (ICC)





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**For more information, please refer to
<https://www.cytology-iac.org/meetings/meetings-list/665-iac-and-asc-international-meeting>**





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Case Challenges!

Case Challenges!

1

(Answers upside-down on the bottom of the page!)

Female 31 years-old. Screening pap test. LBC Thinprep Hologic. Papanicolaou staining.

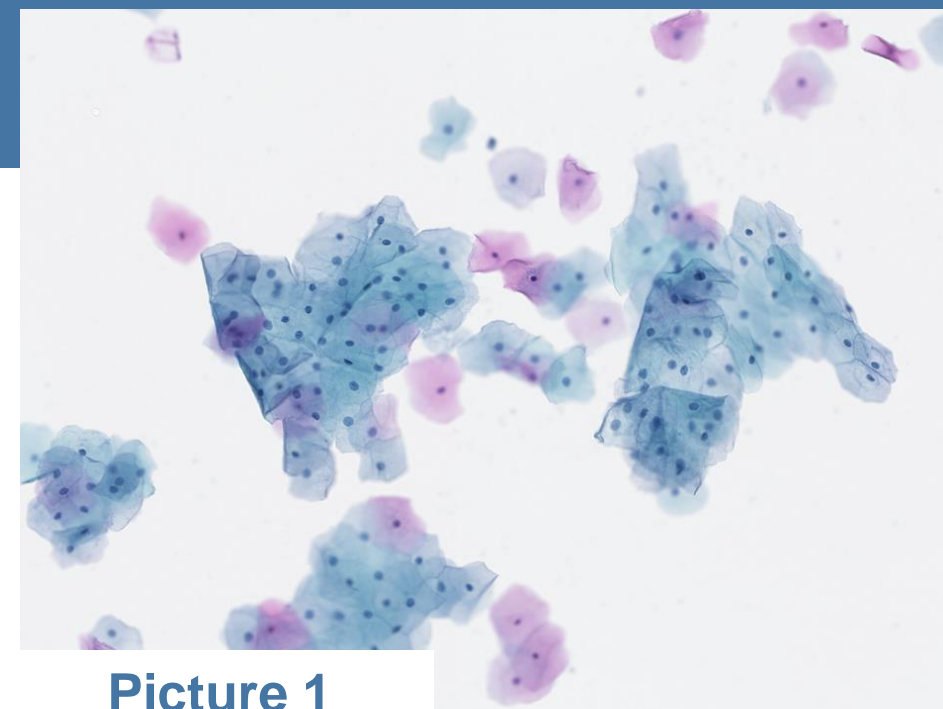
On the slide, there were exclusively normal squamous intermediate and superficial cells (picture 1) except for one group of cells with enlarged nuclei (2.5 to 3 x normal nucleus); binucleated cells and some possible perinuclear halos (picture 2).

How would you report it in each situation?

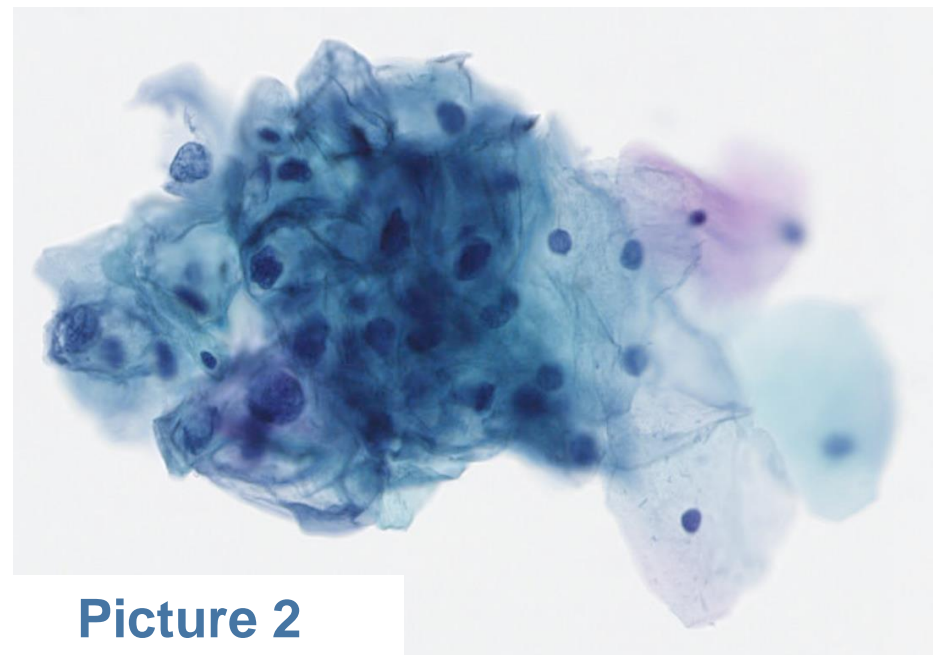
Situation A - you do not know the HPV-HR status

Situation B - you are in a country with HPV primary testing, and you know this woman is HPV-HR positive

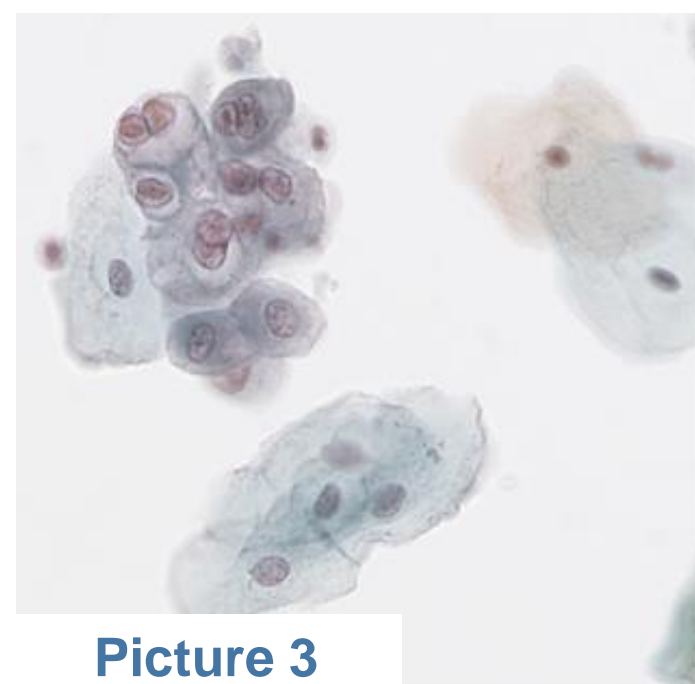
- a) Reactive, benign metaplastic squamous cells
- b) ASC-US ; HR HPV test recommended
- c) Low grade squamous intraepithelial lesion (LSIL) refer to colposcopy.
- d) High grade squamous intraepithelial lesion (HSIL) refer to colposcopy.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

2

Female 29 years-old. Reflex paptest post primary positive HPV-HR testing. LBC Thinprep Hologic. Papanicolaou staining.

On the slide there were numerous exclusively normal squamous intermediate and superficial cells (identical to the previous case - picture 1) except for few groups of cells with one or two enlarged nuclei (x2,5) and some kind of halos without typical koilocytes (picture 3).

How would you report it?

- a) NILM (reactive non neoplastic cells; cellular changes consistent with herpes simplex virus)
- b) ASC-US. HPV-HR test after 6-12 months or refer to colposcopy (European Guidelines)
- c) Low grade squamous intraepithelial lesion (LSIL) refer to colposcopy.
- d) High grade squamous intraepithelial lesion (HSIL) refer to colposcopy.

Clinical cases and pictures provided by
Beatrix Cochand-Priollet
EFCS Secretary General



The EFCS - A Brief History

Louis Thienpont

During the first half of the 20th century, clinical cytology was not a main point of interest in most pathology services in Europe and the USA. In addition to a few pathologist-cytologists, there were also some clinicians, and especially gynaecologists, who turned to cytology.

What Came Before

Between 1954 and 1960, George Papanicolaou published loose-leaf, well-illustrated fascicles on gynaecological and other fields of cytology. They were later brought together in a one-volume Atlas of Exfoliative Cytology. Based on the new insights in the value of cervical cancer screening that developed in those years, pathology labs in many countries became involved in cervical cancer screening programmes. At the same time, a new interest was directed towards some other fields of cytology, such as respiratory and urinary cytology, and cytology of pleural and peritoneal effusions.

On July 13th, 1957, on the occasion of an international symposium in Brussels presided by George Papanicolaou, the **International Academy of Cytology (IAC)** was founded by a group whose main protagonists were George Wied, Ruth Graham, Peter Stoll and Hans Klaus Zinser. George Papanicolaou was made honorary president.

That same year, in 1957, the **Belgian Society of Clinical Cytology** was founded as a de facto association. Later, in 1963, it was incorporated as a non-profit association. In that period and during the years following, several other European national societies were also founded.

A Closely-knit Community

In fact, in Scandinavia and all over Europe there were several eminent and sometimes very highly specialized cytology centres, some of them rather famous and internationally recognized. Individual cytologists knew each other very well and maintained close contact. I remember a story that I heard in the 1960s: Carl Lennert, in Kiel, Germany, the genius reformer of lymphoma classification, used to look at Romanowsky stained cytology preparations whenever available. One day, looking at a lymph node cytology slide, he found some unidentified cells and sent the slide to Paul Lopes-Cardoso in Leiden, The Netherlands. He was very amazed to receive the answer – “papillary carcinoma of the thyroid” – almost by return mail!

That same Paul Lopes-Cardoso, at the time President of the Dutch Society of Clinical Cytology, together with its secretary, A.L.C. Schmidt, invited 60 leading European cytologists to attend a symposium on Clinical Cytology in October 1967 at the Dijkzigt Hospital in Rotterdam, they considered and discussed the idea of **founding a European Cytology Society**.



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The European Federation

For some two years, the matter of a European Society was discussed informally by the national societies. If some had been thinking of joining the IAC as groups or as a regional section, this was made difficult by the fact that the IAC required individual applications, under the IAC's own quite strict conditions and criteria.

In 1969 Jacques Jenny took the initiative once more to invite a number of leading European cytologists to the joint meeting of the German, Austrian and Swiss Societies in Sils Maria, Switzerland. There, Jacques Jenny and Nasseem Husain composed preliminary statutes and presented them to the representatives of the 14 countries present. All participants agreed, and together they founded the European Federation of Cytology Societies (EFCS) as a de facto society. George Wied was present but had no active role.

Final statutes were approved in 1970 at the first EFCS congress in Prague, Czechoslovakia, with Jan Zidovsky as President. In the initial statutes, the Council consisted of a President (of the country hosting the Congress), a Pro-President, Past-President, Secretary-General and two treasurers – one for the East and one for the West, as at the time there was no (or only a very difficult) money exchange between East and West Europe. At the start, there were 20 national member societies: five in Eastern Europe and fifteen in the West. Each national society nominated two of its members as representatives.

In 1971, the IAC Congress was organized in London. As a rule, from 1970 on, a European congress took place every year, alternatively 'in the East' and 'in the West', except when the IAC's International Congress was organized in Europe. Therefore, the 2nd European Congress only took place in 1972, in Budapest, Hungary, with G. Sassy-Dubray as President. From the start, the EFCS paid much attention to continuing education. So, on those occasions when it was difficult to get visa for the West, a substitute tutorial was organized in the East for those who could not attend the Western conference (Neubrandenburg, DDR, 1980; Agárd, Hungary, 1986; Warsaw, Poland, 1995, 2001...).

On the third European Congress in 1973, in Malmö, Sweden, presided by Josef Zajicek, Niels Stormby introduced the EFCS logo, still used today.

Further Steps

In 1991, at the occasion of the 19th Congress in Turku, Finland, presided by Kari Syrjanen, new statutes were approved. They paid special attention to the professional training of both medical and non-medical (scientific and technical) cytologists, and to the uniformity of minimum requirements in the training, qualification and practice of cytology. By that time, the Berlin Wall had fallen, and so the new statutes specified one treasurer only, with a term of office of 6 years, renewable.

In the early 1990s articles appeared in the American and European press about false negative cervical cytology results. Funded by the European Community, Dulcie Coleman (St. Mary's Hospital London) organized a working group: the ECTP-CCS or European Community Training Project – Cervical Cancer Screening. They had a few meetings (in London, Munich, Brussels, Luxemburg and Marbella) that finally led to the formation within the EFCS of a Committee for Q.A. and Training in Cytology (council meeting in Prague, September 24, 1992). Another council meeting on the occasion of the 1995 IAC meeting in Madrid appointed Peter Vooijs (Nijmegen, The Netherlands) to lead this committee, that was taken over by Ulrich Schenck (Munich, Germany) and now by Paul Cross (U K) and renamed 'Quality Assurance, Training and Examinations Committee' (QUATE). This Committee aims to organize at least once a year, as part of the European Congress or of a tutorial, aptitude tests for those cytotechnologists (and cytologists) who aim to get a European certificate.

EFCS Secretary-Generals

1970 - J. Jenny, Switzerland
 1976 - O.A.N. Husain, UK
 1982 - F. Rilke, Italy
 1988 - P. Pfister, Germany
 1994 - W. Olszewski, Poland
 2000 - A. Verhest, Belgium
 2006 - Ph. Vielh, France
 2012 - M. Toetsch, Austria
 2018 - B. Cochand-Priollet, France

EFCS Treasurers

1970 - P. Lopes Cardoso & W. Ebert
 1976 - S. Witte & D. Neuser
 1982 - D. Obradovic & S. Zimmer
 1989 - I. Baltisser & R. Goertchen
 1990 - I. Baltisser
 1993 - U. Schenck
 2001 - M. Toetsch
 2012 - A. Fassina



Weimar 1976

Front row: Paul Lopes Cardoso, Naseem Husain, Erica Wachtel
 Second row: Jacques Jenny, Arthur I. Spriggs, Jan Zidovsky (photo: N. Husain)



Board and advisers meeting - Paris 2010

Front row: Arrigo Bondi, Amanda Herbert, Torill Sauer
 Second row: Philippe Vielh, Louis Thienpont, Martin Toetsch
 Third row: Beatrix Cochand-Priollet, Alain Verhest, Ben Davidson, Fernando Schmitt



Board and advisers Paris - 2011

Front row: Fernando Schmitt, Arrigo Bondi, Luigi Di Bonito
 2nd row: Ben Davidson, Louis Thienpont, Philippe Vielh, Martin Toetsch



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The EFCS in the 21st Century

In 2001 the first EFCS-website was created by Alain Verhest who was Secretary-General at the time. A new EFCS-website was created in 2007, with Arrigo Bondi as its webmaster. The current website was built in 2020.

Confronted with the drawbacks of a de facto association, the need for a legal person and the possibility of invoicing, in 2008 The Secretary-General, Philippe Vielh, and the board chose to turn the EFCS into a Belgian non-profit organisation ('vzw'). A few discussions and meetings later, the legal statutes of EFCS vzw were approved at the 35th European Congress in 2009 in Lisbon (President: Fernando Schmitt). They were registered in Ghent on December 18th, 2009 and published in the Belgian State Journal. The 'house rules' that go with the new statutes and the new website again emphasize the modalities of organizing congresses, tutorials and QUATE exams.

Current Secretary-General Beatrix Cochand-Priollet, as well as the board members and advisers, put even more effort into continued education in general, and into e-learning as well as research. Among the closely-monitored committees we now have, among others, an Educational Committee, a Scientific and a Residents' Committee, and a Tutorial/QUATE Committee. Besides that, just recently the EFCS got its own Twitter account, maintained by the current Secretary-General herself.

For trainees and young cytologists, a YEFCS (Young EFCS) section was created inside EFCS vzw in 2020. It is managed by Ricardo Veiga and has its separate YEFCS Twitter account.

We now look forward to the 43rd European congress in Wroclaw, Poland, on 3-5 October 2021, with Jerzy Klijanienko as president. The congress had to be postponed because of the COVID pandemic, but it looks like our patience is being rewarded, and besides virtual participation, many live participants will be able to enjoy a wonderful Cytology Congress in the historic town of Wroclaw.

Clearly, after more than 50 years, EFCS vzw is still very young at heart.

References

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This article could not have been written without the help of many friends and colleagues who offered additions and corrections. To all of you: my sincere thanks.



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Thank you for your time!
Please send your feedback to residentsyoung@efcs.eu



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