

DSAEK course in the Dominican Republic

THE FIRST DSAEK COURSE in the Dominican Republic was held on June 18-19 2014 in Santiago, DR. Twenty-one doctors attended this first course, most of whom were cornea trained ophthalmologists but had not had the opportunity to learn the advanced techniques of DSAEK in a comfortable educational environment.

To ensure a good educational experience, the lectures given in both English and Spanish and the wet-labs were taught by both English and Spanish speaking trainers and assistants. The course included lecture instruction sessions along with refreshments the first evening, followed by 3 instructive live surgery cases the following morning. A hands-on wet lab with human eye bank eyes, microscopes, instruments, endothelial inserters, and interactive instruction round out the course on the second day.

This first course was sponsored by OSI and Sight-Life, in part by IOP inc., as well as locally by OARN. The Dominican Ophthalmologic Society also was involved by letting their members know about the availability of this training course.


The course was directed by Dr. Michael Ehrenhaus, Director of New York Cornea Consultants in NY and Assistant Professor at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, and Dr. Sebastian Guzman, Director of MD Ojos in Santiago, DR. The lectures and surgeries were given and performed by Dr. Ehrenhaus with Dr. Guzman assisting in both translating some more complicated issues as well as performing parts of some of the surgeries.

The lectures discussed all aspects of the surgeries, from incision making to improving results and even included advanced techniques involving using amniotic membrane for surface healing. The live cases included a combined cataract surgery with DSAEK,

DSAEK on a prior failed endothelial transplant, and a vitrectomy re- DSAEK case, and all attendees were able to view the surgeries in a comfortable setting while also having the opportunity to listen and ask questions while the surgeries were being performed.

The wet-labs were given by OSI president Jerry Barker and by Ricardo Diaz of MD Distribution along with Dr. Ehrenhaus and Dr. Guzman. Each attendee was able to practice endothelial removal, cutting an endothelial disc, and implanting the tissue in a human eye bank eye.

Future courses will be open to the international crowd with an emphasis on the Spanish speaking ophthalmic community, though all lectures, surgeries and wet-labs will continue to be given in both Spanish and English. Future courses will continue to be open to local doctors bringing their own cases for surgery as well as consultation and guidance.

For information about attending upcoming courses, including an Advanced Course, you can contact Dr Ehrenhaus at corneaconsult@me.com and Dr Guzman at sebastianguzman@hotmail.com. 

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