



8th annual meeting of the Austrian Wound Association

The 8th annual meeting of the Austrian Wound Association (AWA) which took place from April 21-22 2006 in Vienna was dedicated to "The Diabetic Foot".

For diabetic patients, the life time risk of developing foot ulcers amounts to 25%. It is the worst complication of diabetes followed by a high morbidity and mortality and reduced quality of life. The WHO estimates that the costs for treating diabetic foot account for 15-25% of overall diabetes treating costs. Despite these facts, diabetic foot ulcers are still an underestimated complication of diabetes. Worldwide there are over one million amputations, 80% of which are avoidable. In 50% of all cases there is loss of the contralateral extremity within 4 years after the amputation.

At the annual meeting of the AWA, numerous experts and about 140 participants were discussing these problems, presenting the latest strategies for therapy. More then ever, the diabetic foot poses an interdisciplinary challenge and requires excellent collaboration of all disciplines involved in specialized out patient departments. Moreover, professional and rigorous foot screening, patient

training, foot care by the patients themselves and orthopaedic shoe support is absolutely necessary. By implementing these actions, the aim of reducing both amputation rates and the financial burden for the community and, last but not least, raising the quality of life of the affected could be accomplished.

During the meeting the honorary membership of the AWA was conferred to Prof. Dr. Finn Gottrup and to Prof. Dr. Hugo Partsch. A laudation was spoken to both of them by the president of the AWA, Doz. Dr. Gerald Zöch and the vice president Prof. Dr. Norbert Sepp.

As every year several workshops were offered to the participants dealing with the latest developments in local therapy of chronic wounds as well as presenting well established therapies with the possibility of direct communication with the experts.

The 9th annual meeting of the AWA will take place in Bregenz together with the German speaking Swiss Association for Wound healing (SAfW) from June 1-2 2007.



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From left: Prof. Dr. Hugo Partsch, Doz. Dr. Gerald Zöch, Prof. Dr. Norbert Sepp, Prof. Dr. Finn Gottrup.



Social evening in the pathologic-anatomic museum in the "Old General Hospital"