

## ESH Conference in Estoril

### MDS Diagnosis Report – 5th ESH International Conference on Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS)

The European School of Haematology (ESH) is an institution founded in 1985 to promote and facilitate access to cutting-edge knowledge in haematology and related disciplines at the European level. ESH conferences are designed to promote informal interaction and discussion on specific haematology subjects. The ESH International Conference on Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS) is an intensive 3 day conference that takes place every two years and that includes topics related to MDS biology, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment.

This year's conference, the 5th edition, was held on the Estoril Congress Centre, in Portugal. The organization committee included european experts in the MDS field, such as Mario Cazzola, Pierre Fenaux and Eva Hellström-Lindberg. The program encompassed an extensive review on diagnostic criteria for MDS, including cytology, cytogenetics, flow cytometry and molecular analyses. In addition, the new World Health Organization (WHO) 2016 updates for the diagnosis of MDS were also presented at the meeting. Current prognostic stratification of MDS patients was also reviewed, making emphasis in new reported prognostic factors. Saturday talks showed which are the currently available treatments for both low-risk and high-risk MDS patients, from single follow up to allogeneic stem cell transplantation, as well as which are the emerging treatments, based on targeted therapies and clinical trials. Over the past few years, and thanks to innovative technologies such as Next Generation Sequencing (NGS), there has been a revolution in genomics, which has led to the discovery of most of the genes involved in MDS. The haematologists' job now is to understand how these techniques and all these data can be integrated into the clinical management of MDS patients. Therefore, one of the main topics discussed during all the conference has been the translation of molecular data into the diagnosis, prognostic stratification and treatment of MDS patients. In addition, the program also included specific talks on MDS related disorders, such as chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia, aplastic anaemia, iron overload, paediatric MDS and therapy-related MDS. Moreover, the "meet the experts" morning sessions gave the attendees the opportunity to assist to workshops with a limited number of participants that promote the interaction and discussion of specific topics with experts in the field. With approximately 300 participants and invited speakers from all over the world, this year's conference has sure met everyone's expectations.

### Disclaimer

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Dr. Leonie Saft

The MDS diagnosis booth remained opened during the three days of the meeting, and collected e-mails for the registration of 15% of the participants. Collaborators from the MDS diagnosis website, such as Dr Leonie Saft and Dr Arjan Van der Loodstrecht, were present in the conference as invited speakers and helped promoting the website. Almost everyone that approached our booth were interested in registering on the website. Visitors included people from several countries, specially from Italy and Portugal. Everyone thought that the website was a very interesting initiative. For senior clinicians, having an educational platform online dedicated to the MDS clinical management, is a very helpful tool to transmit this knowledge to their students. Some of the participants were interested in knowing if the lectures and presentations from the website could be downloaded. They thought that this way it would be easier to include the information in educational seminars and workshops. We had a special request from a doctor from India, who said that in his country not everyone can have acces to the internet, and being able to download the presentations could give them the opportunity to share this knowledge with other haematologists.

Overall, the feedback on the website was very positive which shows that we are doing a good job and that the have to keep updating with the latest topics, so everyone can benefit from it and and we can keep helping in the diagnosis of MDS.