

In Union there is Strength

The Argentine Journal of Cardiology devotes for the third consecutive year an issue to articles exclusively related to cardiovascular imaging, which speaks of the importance of this methodology for the diagnosis and prognosis of heart disease.

In most World Societies, nuclear magnetic resonance, together with computed tomography, Doppler echocardiography and nuclear medicine have associated to work under one roof and the Argentine Society of Cardiology is no exception, as from this year, the three councils, still without merging, have decided to interact in their annual courses and in the organization of a single Cardiovascular Imaging Congress, prior to the creation of a large Council which will integrate all imaging modalities.

Today, where different spurious interests struggle, a close cooperation between the different imaging techniques is more than ever necessary in pursuit of a harmonious growth based above all on the needs of the sick and subsequently in the costs.

It is in the field of non-invasive imaging where the number of tools to assess cardiovascular disease has greatly expanded in the last decade. However, it is not cost-effective to superimpose techniques on the same patient, and for this reason the clinical cardiologist should have a thorough understanding of their specific strengths and limitations, in order to choose the one that can provide the highest quality information with the least possible risk.

In an effort to respond to the need of well-supported use of imaging techniques, there are currently guidelines with the appropriate multimodality use criteria to determine the risk of stable ischemic heart disease, and certainly in the near future other consensus will dictate guidelines for different cardiovascular pathologies.

The reader will find in this extensive issue the usual letter from the Director of the Argentine Journal of Cardiology, Dr Hernán Doval who inquires whether the "appropriate use" of diagnostic tests is similar to their clinical usefulness.

Dr Jorge Trainini in his accustomed art section paints with words the need to join the rationality of science with feeling and introduces us in the world of postmodernism with the work of Germaine Bonifacio, a young contemporary Argentine artist who illustrates the cover of this issue.

In an article of great topical importance, as is three-

dimensional echocardiography, doctors Karima Adde-tia, Víctor Mor-Avi and Roberto Lang, the latter a recognized world leader in the field of echocardiography, write about the impact of its use in daily practice.

In this issue, six original articles are presented, four of them with editorials by expert cardiologists with deep knowledge in imaging techniques who examine the contributions and limitations of each work.

In a very complete editorial, Dr Lorenzo Monserrat Iglesias evaluates, in the context of current knowledge, the usefulness of tissue Doppler to identify a subpopulation of low risk patients with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy analyzed by Dr. Juan P. Ochoa et al.

Dr Luis Caballero and Dr. Patricio Lanzelotti, international authority on the subject of eco-stress and new techniques, write an editorial on the work of Dr Cristian Caniggia et al. on the feasibility and contributions of global and regional longitudinal 2D strain during echo-stress with exercise.

Dr. Leopoldo Perez de Isla masterfully examines the original and detailed work of Dr Martin Lombardero et al. who explore where the effective mitral orifice is in 2D and 3D echo studies.

Dr. Miguel Quiñones, acknowledged master of echocardiography, analyzes the article where Dr Héctor Deschle et al. demonstrate the importance of atrial longitudinal strain analysis and its early changes in young controlled hypertensive subjects, and propose that regional and global atrial and ventricular strain analysis could be part of the echocardiographic routine.

Dr Martin Beck et al. present echocardiographic findings in patients with scleroderma without history of cardiovascular disease.

In an interesting review article, Dr Gabriel Maluenda et al. update the role of advanced cardiac imaging in the planning of percutaneous aortic valve replacement.

In a basic science article, Dr Enriqueta Serafini et al. demonstrate how cola beverages accelerate the growth of the atherosclerotic plaque in ApoE^{-/-} mice.

As always, in scientific letters and images in cardiology, interesting topics that deserve to be divulged are reported.

Finally, the most recent sections contain information for patients who require a cardiovascular ultrasound study, a comment on a basic science study, and from the cardiologist's perspective, comments on

eight outstanding articles recently published in first level international journals. A video on how a stress echo study is performed completes this issue.

The predominance of articles on echocardiography undoubtedly indicates that it is the most frequently used imaging technique in cardiology in our region, with new developments that promise to further improve health care and interact with other, much more expensive, but not less important, techniques.

The great challenge for the clinical cardiologist is, currently, to know in depth the practical applications of imaging and to work closely with cardiologists specialized in the different techniques in order to employ the most appropriate and clinically advantageous tool for the patient.

Dr. Jorge A Lowenstein^{MTSAC}
Associate Director of the RAC