Radiology teaching (and) illusions

In the ECR meeting next spring, a new case-based session will be held in which two cases per each of all the most common body regions will be presented. All radiologists, both general or specialized, are invited. To ensure that the atmosphere is not too heavy and to encourage imaginative thinking, at the mid-point interlude in the session illusions will be presented showing the similarities between radiological images and commonplace objects. Future attendees are invited to submit such illusions. Entries close 15th December 2013.

The session organisers:
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THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF RADIOLOGY.

Since 1967 European radiologists have gathered to exchange ideas and increase mutual knowledge. While initially these conferences took place every four years in different locations, it was soon felt it would be better and more efficient if it were to take place annually and in a single location. Due to its geographical location the choice fell on Vienna, where it has remained ever since.

The first “new” European Congress of Radiology was thus opened in September 1991, presided by Professor Lissner. About 5000 people participated in the scientific sessions with a total number of 9000 visitors. Since then, the number of attendees has doubled. About half come from Europe with 25% from the Americas, others from Asia, and some from Africa and Oceania. More than 58 000 radiologists from 155 countries have joined the European Society of Radiology. So the ECR has truly become an international meeting and is, in fact, the second-largest radiological meeting globally and ranks amongst the largest medical meetings in Europe. Radiologists appreciate it as an event where basic knowledge can be acquired in all subspecialties and with all modalities. At the same time, scientists can present their latest research and discuss the most efficient and least invasive methods to establish diagnosis and optimize patient management.

Since 2003, special emphasis has also been put on meeting the requirements of young people, both students and residents, but also radiographers-in-training with the “Invest in the Youth” programme and lately with the “Rising Stars”.

ECR 2014 CASE-BASED SESSIONS

In 2014, a new case-based session format will be introduced at the end of the congress to give newcomers an opportunity to check their knowledge in a setting designed to simulate a routine situation. In the session, which will comprise two sub-sessions separated by an interlude, the audience will receive a short clinical history of a patient and then have some time to see a couple of the most representative images from various modalities. They can then answer some case-related questions using interactive voting pads. Each case will be concluded by the presenter analyzing the most helpful pathognomonic signs and important differential diagnosis. Two cases will be presented per body region, In the first part of the session, the areas of neuro, maxillofacial, musculoskeletal, liver and breast imaging will be covered. In the second part, the update will include head and neck, chest, spine, gastrointestinal and genitourinary. Thus, general radiologists might also want to test their knowledge in a range of subspecialties outside their principal area of interest.

“Doctors without anatomy are like moles – they work in the dark and the product of their work are piles of earth” (Tiedemann F).

The same applies to radiologists. Only when we have a clear picture of physiological conditions and normal variants, can we even think of discerning pathology and categorizing disease. To make matters a little bit trickier, we also have to take neurological properties of our own visual sense into account. While pattern recognition relies on differences in density, echogenicity and signal intensity, our mind tends to group shadows, to subjectively form contours and to envisage complete structures where there are minimal outlines. While endeavoring to do all this and to rule in/out a pathology or advise patients appropriately, we mostly don’t let our imagination loose and so often miss some striking illusions [See Figure].

To encourage imaginative thinking, the interval between the two case-based diagnosis sessions will be used to present the most striking of submitted illusions, lookalikes, and freak coincidences. The presentation will be both entertaining and instructive and will finish with an award for the best illusion.

HOW TO ENTER

So, don’t delay: submit your own contribution to socialmedia@meyeu.org and be part of this new session at the ECR 2014. Entries close on 15th December 2013.

While concentrating on the interpretation of diagnostic images, radiologists frequently miss the similarity of the images and common-place objects. Left panel: Paracoronal fat suppressed MR of the pelvis. Right panel: a surprised looking bullock. Radiologists are invited to submit their favorite illusion which will be presented and judged at the case-based session at ECR 2014.