

MEETING NEWS COVERAGE

**American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
Annual Meeting**

Shoulders and simulators mark Friday at AAOS

March 14, 2014

By Rachel M. Frank, MD

Friday was another exciting day in New Orleans at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Annual Meeting. I spent the morning in the Orthopaedic Video Theater and had the pleasure of watching Peter Chalmers, MD, fourth-year resident at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, present his award-winning video “All-arthroscopic patch augmentation of a massive rotator cuff tear: Surgical technique” to a live audience. This video discussed the basic science and indications for arthroscopic patch-augmentation of massive rotator cuff tears, which can be difficult to treat for even the most experienced of shoulder surgeons. Upon asking Dr. Chalmers about his experience presenting and his thoughts on his award, he said, “It was an incredible experience to share my research and the work we have done at Rush with the orthopedic community. It was amazing to see the people in the audience ask questions and take the information they learned back to their institutions to help their patients. It is a real honor to present our work in this venue.” Congratulations to Dr. Chalmers on his incredible accomplishments at this year’s annual meeting.

Later in the day, I spent some time looking at several innovations and advances in surgical simulation training. Several of the exhibitors have pushed the envelope with regard to research and development in surgical simulation products. I think we are on the verge of a true paradigm shift in surgical skills training in orthopedic surgery. I had the opportunity to test out virtual reality fracture and arthroscopy simulation models that provided instant haptic feedback, as well as other training systems designed for the development of basic skills such as drilling, sawing and arthroscopic knot tying. Thankfully there were other meeting attendees waiting in line to use these simulation models or I would likely still be there playing (I mean training) at this minute.

On a similar note, a scientific exhibit entitled “Cost-effective training and assessment simulators for orthopaedic surgical skills” provided an excellent presentation on the use of “homemade” simulation tools and their utility in orthopedic surgical skill development. Led by Gregory Lopez, MD, of Orange, Calif., this exhibit demonstrated how several simulator models, mostly made from equipment purchased at hardware stores, were used to assess psychomotor task performance. The authors even placed some of their training



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models on display, providing for an educational and interactive experience. The results from their pilot studies are encouraging, and it will be interesting to see how this type of training correlates to performance in the actual operating room.

My day ended where it started, with the shoulder. I had the pleasure of listening to several accomplished authors present their original research. The paper session was moderated by John G. Costouros, MD and Patrick J. McMahon, MD. Of note were several papers on the management of proximal humerus fractures, which remains a controversial topic among shoulder and trauma surgeons. The paper entitled “Open reduction and internal fixation versus hemiarthroplasty in the management of proximal humerus fractures” by Robert J. Thorsness, MD noted that patients undergoing hemiarthroplasty are older, lower demand and functionally dependent when compared to patients who undergo ORIF. The researchers also found ORIF to be associated with lower bleeding complications and shorter operative times. A separate study by Cyrus M. Press, MD entitled “Reverse total shoulder arthroplasty (RTSA) versus hemiarthroplasty for the treatment of acute proximal humerus fractures” found improved functional outcomes in patients undergoing RTSA compared with hemiarthroplasty. Of note, patients in this study were significantly younger than patients in the RTSA group. Overall, I found these papers interesting, but given the heterogeneity of patient populations, it is difficult to know which treatment option is superior. These studies bring light to the controversies in surgical management of a difficult-to-treat patient population, and certainly further research comparing fixation methods in uniform patient populations is needed.

Overall, today’s events provided wonderful opportunities for education and networking. The enthusiasm and energy among the attendees was simply incredible. Tomorrow should be another great day, with the start of the Specialty Day as well as the Orthopaedic Research Society Annual Meeting.

References:

Chalmers P. Orthopedic video theater #22. Presented at: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Annual Meeting; March 11-15, 2014; New Orleans.

Lopez G. Scientific exhibit #63. Presented at: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Annual Meeting; March 11-15, 2014; New Orleans.

Thorsness RJ. Paper #738 Presented at: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Annual Meeting; March 11-15, 2014; New Orleans.

Press CM. Paper #739. Presented at: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Annual Meeting; March 11-15, 2014; New Orleans.

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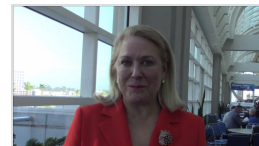
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