

## **Society News: The Israeli Group of Neurogastroenterology (IGN) 2001-2015**

In Israel, being a gastroenterologist means that you have already completed your 4-5 yrs residency in Internal Medicine and then, another 2-3 yrs residency in Gastroenterology (board exams and licenses). Then, becoming a neurogastroenterologist is only a question of personal choice since there is no structured training program for this sub-sub-specialty of gastroenterology. Since 2012, we have worked hard on a syllabus for those who wish to practice neurogastroenterology. This mission is close to being concluded. Anyway, services of neurogastroenterology exist in almost all of the big university-affiliated hospitals. Most centers take care of a wide range of functional GI disorders (GERD, gastroparesis, constipation, incontinence, dyspepsia and IBS), performing laboratory and motility tests and have specific outpatient clinics for patients with IBS, pelvic floor disorders and GERD. Some groups are "multidisciplinary" in its approach to functional GI disorders. Patients are seen by gastroenterologists, physiotherapists, dieticians, microbiologists, psychologists and GI nurses with a special interest in the field of neurogastroenterology. However, due to limited public health resources, not all of the the large centers can offer such a holistic approach, and therefore, from time to time, patients may be diverted to hospitals that offer, for instance, services of video fluoroscopy-speech rehabilitation or defecography ect. according to the decisions of the referring neurogastroenterologist. In addition, tough cases are frequently brought up into discussion (anonymously) on our internet "forum" and this is of great help to us.

IGN exists since 2001, includes 70 registered members and has an active board of four members, a chairperson and another 3 members. Elections for the active board are performed every third year. IGN is part of the Israeli Gastroenterology Association and mutual collaboration and support are usually flawless.

Among our activities, we organize national scientific meetings 2-3 times a year, patient education classes, an internet forum for patients and another professional forum for physicians. In addition, our group has a meeting at the end of each month where we discuss cases and have a frontal presentation on a related topic. Another important issue which we discuss is "advocacy", and ways to increase the awareness on functional GI disorders among GI doctors and even more importantly among our colleagues – the general practitioners. We frequently give talks at GP meetings on motility disorders instructing on the management approach.

Selected ongoing research studies:

1. Constipation – a multicenter study on a vibrating capsule for idiopathic chronic constipation. PI – Dr. Yishy Ron, Sourasky Medical Center
2. PPI usefulness among chronic coughers, PI – Prof. Ram Dickman, Rabin Medical Center
3. GERD among night-shift workers, PI – Prof. Ram Dickman, Rabin Medical Center
4. Effect of small intestinal bacterial overgrowth on other sugar-intolerances, PI – Prof. Ram Dickman, Rabin Medical Center
5. Effect of Curcumin on IBS symptoms, PI – Dr. Timna Naftali, Meir Medical Center

IGN future national scientific meetings

1. June 2016 – Up-To-Date in Functional GI Disorders
2. December 2016 - Visceral Pain in Functional GI Disorders

Ram Dickman