

Updates in the Diagnosis of ILD and the Role of Cryobiopsy

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In managing patients with interstitial lung disease, there are several recurrent diagnostic dilemmas that we encounter in management. This session of “Diagnostic Dilemmas in Interstitial Lung Disease” reviews some of these diagnostic dilemmas. In particular we are concerned about when and how to diagnose someone with an autoimmune interstitial lung disease. Dr. Streck does a lovely job walking us through a patient case that helps us understand the work-up for patients with autoimmune disease.

I think that hypersensitivity pneumonitis and environmental factors continue to be a real struggle for all of us in trying to manage. This session highlights how the difficulties of that, of finding those environmental exposures, how difficult that can be in managing patients with this and understanding where their disease came from. In addition, we cover some of the smoking related lung diseases, which I think are often underdiagnosed and really contribute to almost all of the interstitial lung diseases.

High resolution CT scan, as everyone knows, is one of our most important tools in the management of patients with interstitial lung disease. So understanding how we can review the high resolution CT scan for more knowledge about interstitial lung disease is important, and we cover some of the new guidelines around the high resolution CT scan in the diagnosis of interstitial lung disease.

In our session “Tissue is the Issue, Pros and Cons of Cryobiopsies in Interstitial Lung Disease”, we review the data around whether or not cryobiopsy is useful, and when it's useful. This a very controversial topic, so we are happy to have done this pro and con debate because we can really review the literature for why it works and why it doesn't work. I think at the end of the day there's probably a role for cryobiopsy, but we're still not really clear what that role might be. Certainly in patients that are high risk for video assisted thoracoscopic surgery, as this is a very attractive option. So optimizing our ability to do these cryobiopsies, having standard procedure so that we can see that the risks and benefits are the same across centers, I think this is the goal for the future of cryobiopsy.