

Dear Readers,



Since its beginning, the Polish Society for the Study of Pain (Polskie Towarzystwo Badania Bólu — PTBB), according to its statutory tasks and the guidelines of IASP and EFIC, the organisations that PTBB belongs to, has been supporting studies on the pathomechanisms of acute and chronic pain, as well as its management.

PTBB recommends multidirectional methods of pain treatment including not only pharmacotherapy, but also rehabilitation, interventional, psychological and additional methods, both in patients with chronic pain of non-cancerous origin, and those suffering from cancer. Also the pain, decreased quality of life and other symptoms accompanying the terminal stage of a condition are the interest of both palliative medicine doctors and people dealing with pain management. Therefore, close cooperation of scientific societies dealing with this issue is recommended.

We therefore present several articles concerning the problems connected with clinical issues observed in palliative medicine. The paper Identification of epidural space in the sacral spine by means of a thermolesion needle and a radiofrequency (RF) generator — a preliminary report concerns an interventional method of sacral spine pain management by means of epidural administration of corticosteroids through the sacral access. The method has been known for many years and in adults it may be difficult to identify the epidural space. The authors suggest another method comprising the use of low and high frequency stimulation, a needle and a thermolesion device. Observations have shown that the method is very effective in identifying epidural space through the sacral access. The publication Anatomical aspects of epidural and spinal analgesia concerns the anatomical predispositions with a significant influence on the quality of epidural and subarachnoid anaesthesia, which is important for using these techniques in constant medicine administration (mainly opioids and baclofen), as well as subarachnoid and epidural neurolysis. We are also publishing the article Communication in palliative care concerning problems related to interpersonal communication in palliative medicine, including the very important role of a psychologist and psychotherapeutic methods. The article Subcutaneous and intravenous administration of analgesics in palliative medicine is also presented, describing the advantages and disadvantages of administering analgesics subcutaneously or intravenously, especially important due to the fact that an increasing number of patients have, for example, ports in central veins, as well as the fact that the methods are recommended by WHO. Also of interest to readers may be the paper titled Effectiveness of octreotide in advanced cancer patients with malignant bowel obstruction and intractable diarrhea which concerns the use of octreotide in patients in the terminal stage of cancer, suffering both from periods of obstruction and diarrhoea that is difficult to treat.

The articles presented in this issue of *Advances of Palliative Medicine* are aimed especially at doctors treating patients suffering from chronic pain; we hope that these papers will be of help in their everyday work with patients.

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Guest Editors

