

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium Sonoma, California

Q. When is The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium?

A. The Best Practices Symposium in PET/CT will be held Thursday April 7, Friday April 8, and Saturday morning April 9, 2010. The symposium will open with a reception on the evening of Wednesday April 6<sup>th</sup>. These dates were chosen to minimize conflict with major nuclear medicine and radiology meetings. Early April is springtime in Sonoma and just before the tourist season begins in earnest. Crowds will be light and the hills green.

Q. Where will The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium take place?

A. The host hotel will again be The Lodge Hotel in Sonoma. This boutique hotel is small enough to provide an intimate atmosphere, yet large enough to easily accommodate our group of roughly 40 people and provide full amenities for the meeting. The hotel is easy to find, located in Sonoma near the charming central square, and is a perfect launching point for visiting the numerous wineries in the region.

Q. Who will be attending the symposium?

A. The invited participants will include imaging physicians, medical oncologists, physicists, and technologists and individuals directly involved in the management of information technology. Imaging physicians will include those who are actively practicing PET/CT as an integrated modality, both those with a nuclear medicine/PET background and those with a CT background. Physicians from academic institutions and cancer centers, as well as those from both large and small private practice settings, will be included. In addition, a few physicists and technologists actively involved in PET/CT practice will be included. Several representatives from the major industry sponsors will also participate as observers, as the symposium is expected to provide useful insights regarding current and anticipated needs of the user community.

Q. Why are we doing this?

A. Utilization of PET-CT has not grown as much as expected, in part due to low payer reimbursement, both technical and professional, relative to the expense and effort inherent in this valuable but complex imaging procedure. This reality has mandated a higher level of efficiency in the performance and interpretation and reporting of PET/CT exams than was needed in the early days of clinical PET. To date this issue has not been directly addressed in a comprehensive manner drawing on the experience and expertise of individuals in a variety of practice settings,

such as we do at the Best Practices Symposium. By bringing hands-on experts from a variety of backgrounds and practice settings together in an intimate and relaxed setting, it will be possible to share experiences and opinions regarding the best practices for PET/CT imaging in increasing practice efficiency and where possible reach consensus on these best practices.

Q. Has this been done before?

A. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> Best Practice in PET/CT Symposium. The previous meetings in 2008 through 2010 were highly successful and the proceedings published in the imaging literature (August 2008 and August 2010 Seminars in Ultrasound, CT and MRI). The prior Best Practices Symposia have also stimulated creation of Plenary sessions at the Society of Nuclear Medicine meetings, as well as related topics covered at the High Country Nuclear Medicine Meeting and at ASTRO and ACR meetings and courses.

Q. What is the goal of this meeting?

A. The Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium will serve as an education symposium for the participants and a focus group to develop consensus on the optimal workflows, procedures and protocols for increasing efficiency in a PET/CT practice. Participants will have an opportunity to share experiences and opinions gained from active practice of PET/CT and, where possible, reach agreements on the preferred workflows, protocols and procedures. As before, the results of the meeting will be presented at national meetings and published.

Q. How will the symposium be structured?

A. The Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium will consist of two and a half days, each of the first two days following a similar structure (see Itinerary), and the last morning will focus on consensus discussions. On Thursday and Friday mornings there will be two hours of short lectures (10 minutes each) by some of the participants framing the issues to be discussed in the afternoon. For the entire afternoon the participants will be broken up into small groups of 8 and each group will spend the afternoon visiting wineries (transportation will be provided) of their collective choice discussing the topics and issues. This affords participants an enjoyable venue to get to know others and share experiences, ideas and opinions. Each group will have a facilitator assigned to insure all topics of the day are discussed and conclusions recorded. In the early evening the participants will reconvene at The Lodge Hotel and there will be a two hour working dinner in which the break out groups will share their afternoon findings, and consensus on the day's topics developed.

Q. Who is sponsoring the Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium?

A. The symposium is sponsored by industry, including manufacturers of PET/CT scanners, manufacturers of radiation therapy equipment, producers and distributors of FDG, and imaging software development firms, through unrestricted educational grants. This activity is for scientific and educational purposes and will not support any proprietary or business interest of any industry contributors. The unrestricted educational grant contributions will cover the hotel room charges at The Lodge Hotel (three nights-Wednesday, Thursday and Friday), breakfast and dinner during the sessions and transportation to local wineries. Additional expenses incurred at the hotel and tasting fees at wineries are at the participants own expense.

Q. Are there provisions for accompanying spouses, friends or companions?

A. The symposium is specifically for the invited participants, and to keep the focus on the intent and goals of the symposium, spouses and the like will not be invited to the morning or evening sessions or the afternoon breakout group excursions. Spouses, friends or companions can certainly accompany a participant and take full advantage of The Lodge Hotel amenities as well as the many attractions in Sonoma, although any related additional expenses will not be covered by the sponsors. The sessions on Thursday and Friday are over at 8:30 PM, allowing for evening activities with an accompanying person. The symposium has been scheduled on Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning so participants have the weekend for any addition activity they would like in the region or bay area, and this also affords plenty of flexibility for the return trip home.

Q. What events are open to accompanying spouses, friends or companions?

A. The wine and cheese welcoming reception on Wednesday, April 6, from 6:30-8:30 PM is open to all, including accompanying spouses, friends or companions of the invited participants. This will take place at the Carneros Bistro Fire Pit Patio, which is to the right of the main lobby entrance. This event is sponsored by the Operations Committee of Best Practices Symposium and will not involve any funding from the industry sponsors. Funding from industry sponsors cannot be used to pay for any expenses or activities of accompanying persons of invited participants per governing compliance agreements of the sponsoring company's unrestricted educational grants for this meeting.

Q. What activities are there for accompanying persons otherwise?

A. Amenities at the Lodge Hotel are listed on their website, which is linked on the right hand side of the Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium website. For further details, call the Lodge Hotel directly. Also on the Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium website activities in

the Sonoma area are linked. Mrs. Susan Kirk will assist in arranging activities for accompanying spouses, friends or companions. She can be reached at [bestpractices@charter.net](mailto:bestpractices@charter.net).

Q. Will sponsoring companies be showing or discussing their products and services?

A. No, The Best Practices in PET/CT Symposium is for scientific and educational purposes only and will not support any proprietary or business interest of the industry sponsors. The representatives from sponsoring companies are present as observers to learn more about the needs of the user community by listening to the discussions throughout all phases of the symposium.

Q. What should I plan to bring to the Symposium?

A. Bring a relaxed attitude and desire to learn. If there are images or printed protocol materials you may want to show others you can bring this, but you are not obligated to do so. Mostly bring your hands on experience and opinions based on increasing the efficiency of your PET/CT imaging practice. Those asked to give one of the 10 minute morning lectures can bring their laptop, or the talks on a CD or flash drive. We will download these and print out handouts of the power point files at the meeting for distribution. All participants will be provided with booklets of all the meeting materials on Thursday morning. Much of this material is on the meeting website as well.

Q. What kind of weather is expected?

A. Generally, perfect. Early April in Sonoma is well into the spring season with the winter rains largely past and before the summer heat. Daytime temperatures will typically be in the high 60s to low 70s, and evenings cool, down to the 50s and high 40s in early morning, so bring a sweater or light jacket. Bring sunglasses as it will very likely be bright and sunny. There is still a small chance of rain, as the rain doesn't taper off completely until May.

Q. Are all the meals provided?

A. Yes. You will be well fed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning. An exquisite breakfast buffet will be served right in The Palm room throughout the morning session. For the afternoon breakout session, each group will have a picnic basket of nuts, fruits, crackers and cheeses to enjoy during the afternoon visiting wineries. A complete dinner buffet will be served right in the Palm room throughout the evening session. Wednesday evening, the welcome reception will feature outstanding wines from the Sonoma region and local artisan cheeses. Any additional dining Wednesday would be at your own expense.

Q. Is the wine tasting at wineries covered?

A. The actual wine tasting fees that most wineries charge is not covered and is at your own expense. Fees vary depending on the winery and level of vintages you elect to taste, usually \$5 or \$10, but can be higher for the reserve wines. Small wineries are often free, and usually if you purchase wine, your tasting fees are waved. If you purchase bottles of wine be aware you can no longer take this home as carry on luggage, and the bottles would have to be properly stowed in checked luggage. Due to the moderate temperatures however, early April is a perfect time to have the winery ship any wine you purchase directly to your home if your home state allows this (most do, and the winery will know which states permit shipping).

Q. What happens after the meeting?

A. The Symposium officially ends at 11:00 AM Saturday morning, but you can continue discussions with new friends and colleagues during the day or pursue other plans. Saturday afternoon is free for exploring the Sonoma region or bay area or returning home. Contact information of all the participants is also on the website.

.