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Front Matter: Volume 8805

, "Front Matter: Volume 8805," Proc. SPIE 8805, Head and Neck Optical Diagnostics, 880501 (26 June 2013); doi: 10.1117/12.2033954

SPIE.

Event: European Conferences on Biomedical Optics, 2013, Munich, Germany

Head and Neck Optical Diagnostics

Christian Betz
Brian J. F. Wong
Editors

13–14 May 2013
Munich, Germany

Sponsored by
The Optical Society (United States)
SPIE

In conjunction with
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Volume 8805

Proceedings of OSA Biomedical Optics-SPIE, 1605-7422, V. 8805

Head and Neck Optical Diagnostics, edited by Christian Betz, Brian J. F. Wong,
Proc. of OSA Biomedical Optics-SPIE Vol. 8805, 880501 · © 2013 OSA-SPIE
CCC code: 1605-7422/13/\$18 · doi: 10.1117/12.2033954

Proc. of OSA-SPIE Vol. 8805 880501-1

The papers included in this volume were part of the technical conference cited on the cover and title page. Papers were selected and subject to review by the editors and conference program committee. Some conference presentations may not be available for publication. The papers published in these proceedings reflect the work and thoughts of the authors and are published herein as submitted. The publisher is not responsible for the validity of the information or for any outcomes resulting from reliance thereon.

Please use the following format to cite material from this book:

Author(s), "Title of Paper," in *Head and Neck Optical Diagnostics*, edited by Christian Betz, Brian J. F. Wong, Proceedings of OSA Biomedical Optics-SPIE Vol. 8805 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2013) Article CID Number.

ISSN: 1605-7422

ISBN: 9780819498137

Copublished by

SPIE

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Printed in the United States of America.

Publication of record for individual papers is online in the SPIE Digital Library.

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Paper Numbering: Proceedings of SPIE follow an e-First publication model, with papers published first online and then in print and on CD-ROM. Papers are published as they are submitted and meet publication criteria. A unique, consistent, permanent citation identifier (CID) number is assigned to each article at the time of the first publication. Utilization of CIDs allows articles to be fully citable as soon as they are published online, and connects the same identifier to all online, print, and electronic versions of the publication. SPIE uses a six-digit CID article numbering system in which:

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Contents

v	Conference Committee
vii	Introduction

OPTICAL DIAGNOSTICS I

- 8805 02 **Optical detection of cancer and precancerous lesions of the upper aerodigestive tract: methods for assessment of vertical extensions** [8805-2]
M. Kraft, Kantonsspital Baselland (Switzerland); C. Arens, Univ. Hospital Magdeburg (Germany)
- 8805 03 **Concept for tremor compensation for a handheld OCT-laryngoscope** [8805-4]
S. Donner, S. Deutsch, S. Bleeker, T. Ripken, A. Krüger, Laser Zentrum Hannover e.V. (Germany)

OPTICAL DIAGNOSTICS II

- 8805 04 **Optical imaging of oral pathological tissue using optical coherence tomography and synchrotron radiation computed microtomography** [8805-6]
S. Cănjău, C. Todea, C. Sinescu, M. L. Negruțiu, Univ. of Medicine and Pharmacy (Romania); V. Duma, Aurel Vlaicu Univ. of Arad (Romania); A. Mănescu, Univ. Politecnica delle Marche (Italy); F. I. Topală, Univ. of Medicine and Pharmacy (Romania); A. G. Podoleanu, Univ. of Kent (United Kingdom)
- 8805 05 **Optical coherence tomography and confocal endomicroscopy for rhinologic pathologies: a pilot study** [8805-8]
B. Olzowy, N. Starke, T. Schuldt, Univ. Rostock (Germany); G. Hüttmann, Univ. zu Lübeck (Germany); E. Lankenau, Opto Medical Technologies GmbH (Germany); T. Just, Univ. Rostock (Germany)
- 8805 06 **Probe-based confocal laser endomicroscopy in head and neck malignancies: early preclinical experience** [8805-7]
A. Englhard, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany); S. Girschick, Laser-Forschungslabor (Germany); B. Mack, V. Volgger, O. Gires, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany); C. Conderman, Univ. of California, Irvine Medical Ctr. (United States); H. Stepp, Laser-Forschungslabor (Germany); C. S. Betz, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany)

OPTICAL DIAGNOSTICS III

- 8805 07 **Vibration of the human tympanic membrane measured with OCT in a range between 0.4 kHz and 6.4 kHz on an ex vivo sample** [8805-5]
A. Burkhardt, L. Kirsten, M. Bornitz, T. Zahnert, E. Koch, Universitätsklinikum Carl Gustav Carus Dresden (Germany)

POSTER SESSION

- 8805 08 **Laser Doppler flowmetry evaluation of gingival recovery response after laser treatment**
[8805-10]
C. Todea, S. Cănjău, D. Dodenciu, M. I. Miron, A. Tudor, C. Bălăbuc, Univ. of Medicine and
Pharmacy (Romania)

Author Index

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Introduction

The Head and Neck Optical Diagnostic Society (HNODS) is an interest group that was founded in 2008. Its main focus is to encourage the practice and use of optical diagnostic techniques in the head and neck to improve early diagnosis and treatment of patients. The HNODS has more than 300 members, consisting of clinicians, scientists, physicists, engineers, technicians, radiologists and pathologists. The HNODS holds an annual Scientific Meeting to report the advances in the field.

The 5th Scientific Meeting of the HNODS was held in May 2013 in Munich in conjunction with the European Conference on Biomedical Optics (ECBO). Being run alternatively by the OSA and SPIE as an internationally renowned platform that brings together scientists, clinicians and engineers with an interest in both optics/photonics and medicine to share their experiences, the ECBO provided a perfect setting for the HNODS meeting.

Altogether, 20 excellent talks and 3 outstanding posters were presented, and the sessions had a rather remarkable attendance. Apart from the poster presentations, there were 3 Optical Diagnostic Sessions and one Photodynamic Therapy/Photochemical Internalization Session (PDT/PCI) dedicated to HNODS. Many talks of the Optical Diagnostic Sessions focused on the detection of premalignant lesions of the head and neck with the help of optical techniques, such as optical coherence tomography, narrow band imaging, confocal laser endomicroscopy and hyperspectral endoscopy. Other interesting applications such as the use of optical coherence tomography for a three dimensional assessment of the pediatric airway, or for a further differentiation of rhinologic pathologies and middle ear diseases were reported as well. Another actively discussed topic was the global perspective in using optical imaging techniques for oral cancer detection and diagnosis. In the PDT/PCI session, new results in the treatment of incurable head and neck cancer with PDT and PCI were reported, focusing on new drugs used for PCI ex vivo and in vivo and on the treatment of skull base tumors with PDT.

In summary, this was a highly successful meeting and we are looking forward to possible further collaborations in the future.

Christian Betz
Brian J. F. Wong