



73rd American Academy of Dermatology Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California (20th March 2015 – 24th March 2015)

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I would firstly like to thank the BAD for sponsoring my attendance at the 73rd AAD Meeting in San Francisco, a city rich in both culture and history. This was my first ever visit to an AAD meeting – and what an experience it was! The conference was held at the Moscone Centre in downtown San Francisco and as soon as I arrived saw numerous billboards down the road advertising biologic treatments such as secukinumab and antifungals such as luliconazole. The sessions typically began at 7.15am in the morning and can go on to 5.30pm in the evening. The conference was already buzzing from the very first day, with rows of coaches dropping keen delegates off at the centre, all ready to go! Completely spoilt for choice, it was rather difficult to decide which sessions to attend. On the first day of the conference I attended a talk on the classification of capillary malformations before taking a short walk to another wing of the conference centre down the road to attend a series of lectures on skin disorders in patients with skin of colour and the treatment dilemmas associated with this. I was reminded of the higher risk of mortality in patients with darker skin types secondary to a skin malignancy due to delayed diagnosis and was there was also an excellent overview on pigmentary disorders and other dermatologic concerns in Asian patients. Later on, attendance at a symposium on cosmetic dermatology was a real eye-opener – it took place in one of the largest halls within the Moscone Centre and the room was packed with attendees. The audience was repeatedly reminded that we could all be potential ‘cosmeceutical superstars’ and we were presented with an exhaustive list of potential topical treatments for disorders of hyperpigmentation: from the more well-known options such as vitamin C and kojic acid to other exotic-sounding agents such as mulberry, licorice and dioic acid.

During the conference I also had the opportunity to present my poster presentation in a 5 minute-live session on the use of **‘Subcutaneous methotrexate in the management of atopic dermatitis – a series of 12 patients’** (which was surprisingly well attended) and to display my other poster submission – **‘Atypical fibroxanthoma: A histological and immunohistochemical review of 26 cases’**. The rest of the conference was spent in various lectures covering updates in management of morphea and other systemic disorders, a drug reaction update detailing the occurrence of multi-drug hypersensitivity and the potential role of viruses in drug hypersensitivity reactions. I also attended the ‘Boards Blitz’ section targeting the US residents and their preparation for their Board exams. There was a heavy focus on dermatopathology and the US residents seemed incredibly confident at reporting such slides – this has most definitely spurred me on to work much harder in this area!

It wasn’t all work though, thankfully – and I took the opportunity to explore San Francisco in the evenings and days following the conference – after all, a trip to San Francisco also wouldn’t be complete without visiting the infamous Alcatraz and taking a relaxing walk along the Golden Gate Bridge, as well as visiting the historic Chinatown and having a casual al fresco lunch at the beautiful waterfront community of Sausalito.

Overall, this trip was extremely memorable and a fantastic learning experience that I would not soon forget.