

# Introduction

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On behalf of the European CanCER Organisation (ECCO) and the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO), we are pleased to present to you the educational programme of the joint ECCO 15 – 34<sup>th</sup> ESMO Multidisciplinary Congress.

This educational programme was developed by the joint efforts of the scientific committee and the educational committees of both ECCO and ESMO. The educational book gives an overview of the presentations being given during the 2009 educational programme which covers all aspects of cancer, ranging from basic science to clinical practice guidelines. Effort was given to show the importance of the multidisciplinary approach in the treatment of common but also rare tumour types.

In the session “Oncogenes revisited”, current views and their implications in clinical practice are discussed. This session covers genes involved in the development of cancer such as the Epidermal Growth Factor System, RAS, mTOR and p53. New insights in tumour development are further addressed in the session on cancer stem cells. This concept is gaining importance by its possible implications in the development of new treatments. The role of these cells will be discussed in the aerodigestive tract and the breast and in haematological malignancies.

The role of cancer prevention is addressed by the current status of chemoprevention in different tumour types. Its rationale and potential is given with special emphasis on breast, prostate and colorectal cancer.

The multidisciplinary approach of triple negative breast cancer, advanced colorectal cancer, stage III non-small cell cancer and the options after relapse of prostate cancer are also reviewed. In addition, the rare tumour session covers treatment aspects of neuro-endocrine tumours.

In relation to supportive care, the management and interpretation of novel toxicities of molecular targeted therapies are given. With the development of targeted therapies, new toxicities have been recognised and every oncologist should be able to deal with them.

In addition to the educational session and educational book, oncologists will be able to gain credits by answering questions at the ECCO website (<http://www.ecco-org.eu/Education/page.aspx/6>).

This educational event would not have been developed without the efforts of many people. We therefore want to thank all members of the scientific committee and the educational committees of both ECCO and ESMO for their input and review, the authors for producing the lectures and manuscripts and the collaborators of the ECCO office, especially Rebekka Mattyasovszky, the ECCO education manager, without whose enduring efforts this educational book would not have been produced.

We wish you a very interesting learning experience during the educational programme of the 2009 joint ECCO 15 – 34<sup>th</sup> ESMO Multidisciplinary Congress and hope to see you again during the ECCO 16 – 36<sup>th</sup> ESMO Multidisciplinary Congress in Stockholm, Sweden from 23–27 September 2011.

Dirk Schrijvers  
*Chair Educational Committee ECCO*

Rolf Stahel  
*Chair Educational Committee ESMO*