

# ***Photonic Therapeutics and Diagnostics X***

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# Contents

- xiii *Conference Committee*
- xix *Introduction to Optical Imaging, Therapeutics, and Advanced Technology in Head and Neck Surgery and Otolaryngology*

## Part A Photonics in Dermatology and Plastic Surgery

### OPTICAL MONITORING OF WOUNDS

---

- 8926 04 **Irradiation with EMOLED improves the healing process in superficial skin wounds** [8926-3]  
R. Cicchi, Istituto Nazionale di Ottica, CNR (Italy) and European Lab. for Nonlinear Spectroscopy (Italy); F. Rossi, F. Tafini, Istituto di Fisica Applicata Nello Carrara, CNR (Italy); S. Bacci, G. De Siena, Univ. degli Studi di Firenze (Italy); D. Alfieri, Light4Tech Firenze S.r.l. (Italy); R. Pini, Istituto di Fisica Applicata Nello Carrara, CNR (Italy); F. S. Pavone, Istituto Nazionale di Ottica, CNR (Italy), European Lab. for Non-linear Spectroscopy (Italy), and Univ. degli Studi di Firenze (Italy)
- 8926 06 **Monitoring the influence of compression therapy on pathophysiology and structure of a swine scar model using multispectral imaging system** [8926-6]  
P. Ghassemi, The Catholic Univ. of America (United States) and MedStar Health Research Institute (United States); T. E. Travis, J. W. Shuppa, L. T. Moffatt, J. C. Ramella-Romana, MedStar Health Research Institute (United States)
- 8926 07 **Hyperspectral characterization of an in vitro wound model** [8926-7]  
L. L. Randeberg, J.-L. Hegstad, L. Paluchowski, M. Milanic, Norwegian Univ. of Science and Technology (Norway); B. S. Pukstad, Norwegian Univ. of Science and Technology (Norway) and St. Olavs Hospital (Norway)
- 8926 08 **Prognostic prospective of laser induced fluorescence as an objective tool to evaluate collagen deposition in thermal wounds: an ex vivo study** [8926-5]  
V. Prabhu, A. Acharya, S. B. S. Rao, P. Kumar, A. Sharan, K. K. Mahato, Manipal Univ. (India)

### CONFOCAL MICROSCOPY

---

- 8926 0F **Feasibility of intraoperative imaging during Mohs surgery with reflectance confocal microscopy** [8926-14]  
E. S. Flores, M. Cordova, K. Kose, W. Phillips, K. Nehal, M. Rajadhyaksha, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Ctr. (United States)

---

## OPTICAL SPECTROSCOPY

---

- 8926 OI **Sensing vascularization of ex-vivo produced oral mucosal equivalent (EVPOME) skin grafts in nude mice using optical spectroscopy** [8926-17]  
K. Vishwanath, R. Gurjar, Radiation Monitoring Devices, Inc. (United States); S. Kuo, A. Fasi, R. Kim, Univ. of Michigan (United States); S. Riccardi, Radiation Monitoring Devices, Inc. (United States); S. E. Feinberg, Univ. of Michigan (United States); D. E. Wolf, Radiation Monitoring Devices, Inc. (United States)
- 8926 OJ **Comparison of cone and cone shell configuration for depth sensitive fluorescence measurements in turbid media** [8926-18]  
Y. H. Ong, Q. Liu, Nanyang Technological Univ. (Singapore)

---

## PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY

---

- 8926 ON **Photodynamic therapy improves the ultraviolet-irradiated hairless mice skin** [8926-22]  
A. E. S. Jorge, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil) and Wellman Ctr. for Photomedicine, Massachusetts General Hospital (United States); M. R. Hamblin, Wellman Ctr. for Photomedicine, Massachusetts General Hospital (United States), Harvard Medical School (United States), and Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology (United States); N. A. Parizotto, Univ. Federal de São Carlos (Brazil); C. Kurachi, V. S. Bagnato, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil)

---

## OPTICAL MICROSCOPY AND OPTICAL COHERENCE TOMOGRAPHY

---

- 8926 OP **High resolution in-vivo imaging of skin with full field optical coherence tomography** [8926-24]  
E. Dalimier, A. Bruhat, LLTECH SAS (France); K. Grieve, Institut Langevin (France); F. Harms, LLTECH SAS (France) and Institut Langevin (France); F. Martins, LLTECH SAS (France); C. Boccara, LLTECH SAS (France) and Institut Langevin (France)

---

## MODEL-BASED ANALYSIS OF OPTICAL DATA

---

- 8926 OS **Estimation of skin optical parameters for real-time hyperspectral imaging applications** [8926-27]  
A. Bjorgan, L. L. Randeberg, Norwegian Univ. of Science and Technology (Norway)
- 8926 OT **Quantitative fluorescence molecular imaging in highly light-absorbing melanomas using a dual-tracer kinetic modeling normalization method** [8926-28]  
K. M. Tichauer, Illinois Institute of Technology (United States); S. C. Kanick, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth (United States); S. J. Deharvengt, Geisel School of Medicine (United States); K. S. Samkoe, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth (United States) and Geisel School of Medicine (United States); T. Hasan, Wellman Ctr. for Photomedicine, Harvard Medical School (United States); R. V. Stan, Geisel School of Medicine (United States); B. W. Pogue, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth (United States), Geisel School of Medicine (United States), and The Wellman Institute of Photomedicine, Massachusetts General Hospital (United States)

- 8926 0U **Combining the diffusion approximation and Monte Carlo modeling in analysis of diffuse reflectance spectra from human skin** [8926-29]  
P. Naglič, Univ. of Ljubljana (Slovenia); L. Vidovič, M. Milanič, Jožef Stefan Institute (Slovenia); L. L. Randeberg, Norwegian Univ. of Science and Technology (Norway); B. Majaron, Jožef Stefan Institute (Slovenia)
- 8926 0V **Monte Carlo modeling of pigmented lesions** [8926-30]  
D. Gareau, The Rockefeller Univ. (United States); S. Jacques, Oregon Health & Science Univ. (United States); J. Krueger, The Rockefeller Univ. (United States)
- 8926 0X **Enhanced diagnostic of skin conditions by polarized laser speckles: phantom studies and computer modeling** [8926-32]  
L. Tchvialeva, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (Canada) and Univ. of British Columbia (Canada); T. K. Lee, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (Canada), Univ. of British Columbia (Canada), BC Cancer Agency (Canada), and Simon Fraser Univ. (Canada); I. Markhvida, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (Canada) and Univ. of British Columbia (Canada); H. Zeng, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (Canada), Univ. of British Columbia (Canada), and BC Cancer Agency (Canada); A. Doronin, I. Meglinski, Univ. of Otago (New Zealand)

---

#### WIDE-FIELD FUNCTIONAL IMAGING

---

- 8926 0Z **Tumor site prediction using spatiotemporal detection of subclinical hyperemia in experimental photocarcinogenesis** [8926-39]  
R. L. Konger, Indiana Univ. School of Medicine (United States); Z. Xu, Purdue Univ. (United States); R. P. Sahu, Indiana Univ. School of Medicine (United States); Y. L. Kim, Purdue Univ. (United States)
- 8926 11 **Hyperspectral imaging for melanoma screening** [8926-41]  
J. Martin, The Rockefeller Univ. (United States) and Columbia Univ. in the City of New York (United States); J. Krueger, D. Gareau, The Rockefeller Univ. (United States)

---

#### POSTER SESSION

---

- 8926 14 **Microneedles rollers as a potential device to increase ALA diffusion and PpIX production: evaluations by wide-field fluorescence imaging and fluorescence spectroscopy** [8926-35]  
R. P. Gracielli Sousa, P. F. C. de Menezes, A. K. L. Fujita, M. B. Requena, A. B. Govone, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); A. Escobar, A. B. de Nardi, Univ. Estadual Paulista (Brazil); C. Kurachi, V. Bagnato, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil)

## Part B Therapeutics and Diagnostics in Urology

---

### TISSUE IMAGING I

---

- 8926 18 **Optical diagnosis of testicular torsion: feasibility and methodology** [8926-45]  
B. Shadgan, The Univ. of British Columbia (Canada); A. Macnab, The Univ. of British Columbia (Canada) and Wallenberg Research Ctr. (South Africa); L. Stothers, The Univ. of British Columbia (Canada); A. M. Kajbafzadeh, Tehran Univ. of Medical Sciences (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

---

### TISSUE THERAPEUTICS

---

- 8926 19 **Rapid infrared laser sealing and cutting of porcine renal vessels, ex vivo** [8926-46]  
N. C. Giglio, T. C. Hutchens, W. C. Perkins, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States); C. Latimer, A. Ward, W. H. Nau, Covidien (United States); N. M. Fried, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States)
- 8926 1A **Blood coagulation using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)** [8926-47]  
P. V. Nguyen, J. Oh, H. W. Kang, Pukyong National Univ. (Korea, Republic of)
- 8926 1B **Ex vivo evaluation of safety and efficacy of vaporization of the prostate using a 300 W high-power laser diode with the wavelength of 980 nm** [8926-48]  
J. Takada, N. Honda, H. Hazama, K. Awazu, Osaka Univ. (Japan)
- 8926 1C **Intraluminal occlusion of the seminal duct by laser and Histoacryl: Two non-invasive alternatives for vasectomy** [8926-49]  
B. Freitag, R. Sroka, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany); S. Koelle, Univ. College Dublin (Ireland); A. J. Becker, W. Khoder, T. Pongratz,; C. G. Stief, M. Trottman, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany)
- 8926 1D **Investigation on the smoke development during laparoscopic surgery** [8926-50]  
R. Sroka, S. Fiedler, T. Pongratz, W. Beyer, G. Hennig, A. Rühm, W. Khoder, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany)
- 8926 1E **A compact, inexpensive infrared laser system for continuous-wave optical stimulation of the rat prostate cavernous nerves** [8926-51]  
W. C. Perkins, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States); G. A. Lagoda, A. L. Burnett, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (United States); N. M. Fried, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States) and Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (United States)

---

### LASER LITHOTRIPSY

---

- 8926 1F **Characterization of a 50- $\mu$ m-core optical fiber for potential use in Thulium fiber laser lithotripsy** [8926-52]  
R. L. Blackmon, T. C. Hutchens, L. A. Hardy, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States); P. B. Irby, Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States); N. M. Fried, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States), Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States), and Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (United States)

- 8926 1G **Investigation on the impact of pulse duration for laser induced lithotripsy** [8926-53]  
R. Sroka, T. Kiris, S. Fiedler, G. Scheib, J. Kuznetsova, T. Pongratz, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany)
- 8926 1H **Rapid vaporization of kidney stones, ex vivo, using a Thulium fiber laser at pulse rates up to 500 Hz with a stone basket** [8926-54]  
L. A. Hardy, C. R. Wilson, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States); P. B. Irby, Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States); N. M. Fried, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States), Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States), and Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (United States)
- 8926 1I **Characterization of calculus migration during Ho:YAG laser lithotripsy by high speed camera using suspended pendulum method** [8926-55]  
J. J. Zhang, D. Rajabhandharaks, J. R. Xuan, R. W. J. Chia, T. Hasenberg, American Medical Systems, Inc. (United States)
- 8926 1J **An integrated fiber and stone basket device for use in Thulium fiber laser lithotripsy** [8926-56]  
C. R. Wilson, T. C. Hutchens, L. A. Hardy, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States); P. B. Irby, Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States); N. M. Fried, The Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte (United States), Carolinas Medical Ctr. (United States), and Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (United States)
- 8926 1K **Visualizing mechanical stress and liquid flow during laser lithotripsy** [8926-57]  
I. Reinten, R. Verdaasdonk, A. van der Veen, J. Klaessens, VU Univ. Medical Ctr. (Netherlands)

---

## TISSUE IMAGING II

---

- 8926 1M **Fluorescence spectroscopy using excitation and emission matrix for quantification of tissue native fluorophores and cancer diagnosis** [8926-63]  
B. Wu, Weill Cornell Medical College (United States); S. K. Gayen, The City College of New York, CUNY (United States); M. Xu, Fairfield Univ. (United States)
- 8926 1P **Volumetric mosaicing for optical coherence tomography for large area bladder wall visualization** [8926-42]  
K. L. Lurie, A. K. Ellerbee, Stanford Univ. (United States)

## Part C      **Optical Imaging, Therapeutics, and Advanced Technology in Head and Neck Surgery and Otolaryngology**

---

### **ADVANCED IMAGING AND NOVEL TREATMENT STRATEGIES IN OTOTOLOGY**

---

- 8926 1Y      **Effect of LLLT on the level of ATP and ROS from organ of corti cells** [8926-121]  
C. Rhee, S.-Y. Chang, J.-C. Ahn, Dankook Univ. Hospital (Korea, Republic of); M.-W. Suh,  
Seoul National Univ. (Korea, Republic of); J. Y. Jung, Dankook Univ. (Korea, Republic of)
- 8926 1Z      **3D optical coherence tomography image registration for guiding cochlear implant  
insertion** [8926-122]  
G.-W. Cheon, H.-W. Jeong, P. Chalasani, W. W. Chien, I. Iordachita, R. Taylor, J. Niparko,  
J. U. Kang, Johns Hopkins Univ. (United States)

---

### **OCT FOR FUNCTIONAL LARYNGEAL IMAGING**

---

- 8926 21      **Automated working distance adjustment for a handheld OCT-Laryngoscope** [8926-124]  
S. Donner, S. Bleeker, T. Ripken, A. Krueger, Laser Zentrum Hannover e.V. (Germany)

---

### **BASIC RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING CONCEPTS FOR AVANCED HEAD AND NECK IMAGING**

---

- 8926 22      **Self optical motion-tracking for endoscopic optical coherence tomography probe using  
micro-beamsplitter probe** [8926-125]  
J. Li, J. Zhang, L. Chou, A. Wang, J. Jing, Z. Chen, Beckman Laser Institute (United States)
- 8926 25      **Characterizing fluorescent imaging properties of antibodies conjugated to IRDye800CW for  
use in imaging of head and neck cancer** [8926-128]  
R. C. Foster, A. M. Krell, T. K. Chung, J. M. Warram, K. R. Zinn, E. L. Rosenthal, The Univ. of  
Alabama at Birmingham (United States)

---

### **PRACTICAL RESULTS OF NOVEL IMAGING TECHNOLOGY IN HEAD AND NECK LESIONS**

---

- 8926 26      **Optical biopsy on head and neck tissue using full-field OCT: a pilot study** [8926-129]  
F. De Leeuw, Institut Gustave Roussy (France) and Univ. Paris-Sud, CNRS (France);  
A. Latrive, LLTECH SAS (France); O. Casiraghi, M. Ferchiou, Institut Gustave Roussy (France);  
F. Harms, LLTECH SAS (France); C. Boccara, Institut Langevin, ESPCI, Paris Tech (France);  
C. Laplace-Builhé, Institut Gustave Roussy (France) and Univ. Paris-Sud, CNRS (France)
- 8926 27      **Widefield fluorescence imaging as an auxiliary tool to select the biopsy site for actinic  
cheilitis diagnosis** [8926-130]  
C. Kurachi, A. Cosci, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); A. Takahama Jr., K. B. F. C. Fontes,  
R. S. Azevedo, Univ. Federal Fluminense (Brazil)

---

## PDT AND RELATED TECHNOLOGY FOR MALIGNANT AND PRE-MALIGNANT HEAD AND NECK LESIONS

---

- 8926 2D **Plasmonic nanobubble theranostics for intra-operative and preventive treatment of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma** [8926-136]  
E. Y. Lukianova-Hleb, Rice Univ. (United States); X. Ren, The Univ. of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Ctr. (United States); R. R. Sawant, Northeastern Univ. (United States); A. M. Gillenwater, M. Kupferman, E. Y. Hanna, The Univ. of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Ctr. (United States); J. A. Zasadzinski, Univ. of Minnesota (United States); X. Wu, The Univ. of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Ctr. (United States); V. P. Torchilin, Northeastern Univ. (United States); D. O. Lapotko, Rice Univ. (United States)

---

## CURRENT CONCEPTS IN LASER SURGERY AND OPTICAL TRACKING

---

- 8926 2E **Investigation on laser induced salivary stone fragmentation** [8926-137]  
R. Sroka, T. Pongratz, M. Eder, M. Domes, M. Vogeser, T. Johnson, V. Siedeck, F. Schroetzlmair, P. Zengel, Klinikum der Univ. München (Germany)
- 8926 2F **Accuracy of optical navigation systems for automatic head surgery: optical tracking versus optical coherence tomography** [8926-138]  
J. Díaz Díaz, M. H. Riva, Leibniz Univ. Hannover (Germany); O. Majdani, Medizinische Hochschule Hannover (Germany); T. Ortmaier, Leibniz Univ. Hannover (Germany)
- 8926 2H **Efficient tissue ablation using a laser tunable in the water absorption band at 3 microns with little collateral damage** [8926-141]  
A. Nierlich, Northwestern Univ. (United States); D. Chuchumishev, Northwestern Univ. (Bulgaria) and Sofia Univ. (Bulgaria); E. Nagel, Northwestern Univ. (United States); K. Marinova, S. Philipov, Sofia Univ. (Bulgaria); T. Fiebig, Northwestern Univ. (United States); I. Buchvarov, Northwestern Univ. (United States) and Sofia Univ. (Bulgaria); C.-P. Richter, Northwestern Univ. (United States)

---

## UPPER AIRWAY OCT AND SPECTROSCOPY

---

- 8926 2N **Raman spectroscopy and oral exfoliative cytology** [8926-147]  
A. Sahu, N. Shah, M. Mahimkar, Advanced Ctr. for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (India); M. Garud, S. Pagare, D. Y. Patil Dental College (India); S. Nair, C. M. Krishna, Advanced Ctr. for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (India)
- 8926 2O **Raman spectroscopy of oral tissues: correlation of spectral and biochemical markers** [8926-148]  
S. P. Singh, C. M. Krishna, Advanced Ctr. for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (India)

## Part D Diagnostic and Therapeutic Applications of Light in Cardiology

---

### SPECTROSCOPY

---

- 8926 2T **Performance improvement by a broadband super-luminescent diode light source in 1.7- $\mu\text{m}$  spectroscopic spectral-domain optical coherence tomography for lipid distribution imaging in a coronary artery** [8926-69]  
M. Tanaka, T. Okuno, H. Obi, I. Hattori, M. Hirano, T. Ueno, S. Tonosaki, K. Murashima, R. Yamaguchi, T. Hasegawa, Sumitomo Electric Industries, Ltd. (Japan)
- 8926 2V **Quantitative evaluation of atherosclerotic plaque phantom by near-infrared multispectral imaging with three wavelengths** [8926-72]  
R. Nagao, K. Ishii, K. Awazu, Osaka Univ. (Japan)

---

### MYOCARDIUM AND THERAPY

---

- 8926 2W **Calcium and voltage imaging in arrhythmia models by high-speed microscopy** [8926-73]  
C. de Mauro, C. A. Cecchetti, D. Alfieri, Light4Tech Firenze S.r.l. (Italy); G. Borile, A. Urbani, M. Mongillo, Venetian Institute of Molecular Medicine (Italy); F. S. Pavone, Univ. degli Studi di Firenze (Italy)
- 8926 2X **Prediction of myocardial damage depth induced by extracellular photosensitization reaction using fluorescence measurement *in vivo*** [8926-74]  
M. Takahashi, E. Ogawa, T. Nakamura, H. Kawakami, N. Machida, M. Yajima, M. Kurotsu, A. Ito, Keio Univ. (Japan); T. Kimura, Keio Univ. School of Medicine (Japan); T. Arai, Keio Univ. (Japan)
- 8926 2Z **Is it possible to prevent morbidity on post cardiovascular surgery applying low level laser therapy?** [8926-76]  
N. C. Pinto, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); I. M. C. Baptista, Univ. Estadual Paulista (Brazil); M. H. C. Pereira, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); N. F. Serrão Jr., Sudoeste Paulista Univ. (Brazil); P. M. A. Pomerantzeff, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); M. C. Chavantes, Univ. Nove de Julho-Uninove (Brazil) and Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil)

---

### LIGHT AND SOUND

---

- 8926 35 **Diagnostic accuracy of integrated intravascular ultrasound and optical coherence tomography (IVUS-OCT) system for coronary plaque characterization** [8926-83]  
J. Li, Beckman Laser Institute (United States) and Univ. of California, Irvine (United States); T. Ma, Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles (United States); D. Mohar, Beckman Laser Institute (United States); A. Correa, Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles (United States); H. Minami, Beckman Laser Institute (United States); J. Jing, Beckman Laser Institute (United States) and Univ. of California, Irvine (United States); Q. Zhou, Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles (United States); P. M. Patel, Univ. of California, Irvine (United States); Z. Chen, Beckman Laser Institute (United States) and Univ. of California, Irvine (United States)

- 8926 38 **Bi-modal imaging of atherosclerotic plaques: Automated method for co-registration between fluorescence lifetime imaging and intravascular ultrasound data** [8926-86]  
D. Gorpas, H. Fatakdawala, J. Bec, D. Ma, D. R. Yankelevich, Univ. of California, Davis (United States); J. W. Bishop, UC Davis Medical Ctr. (United States); J. Qi, L. Marcu, Univ. of California, Davis (United States)

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#### POSTER SESSION

---

- 8926 3M **Comparison of frequency domain optical coherence tomography and quantitative coronary angiography for the assessment of coronary lesions** [8926-101]  
H. Zafar, National Univ. of Ireland, Galway (Ireland) and National Biophotonics and Imaging Platform (Ireland); F. Sharif, Univ. Hospital Galway (Ireland), National Univ. of Ireland, Galway (Ireland), and Bio Innovate (Ireland); M. J. Leahy, National Univ. of Ireland, Galway (Ireland), National Biophotonics and Imaging Platform (Ireland), and Royal College of Surgeons (Ireland)
- 8926 3N **Cardiac tissue characterization using near-infrared spectroscopy** [8926-102]  
R. Singh Moon, C. P. Hendon, Columbia Univ. (United States)

## Part E Optics in Bone Surgery and Diagnostics

---

#### BONE SURGERY AND ABLATION

---

- 8926 3P **Efficient bone cutting with the novel diode pumped Er:YAG laser system: in vitro investigation and optimization of the treatment parameters (Invited Paper)** [8926-103]  
K. Stock, R. Diebold, F. Hausladen, R. Hibst, Univ. Ulm (Germany)
- 8926 3Q **Laser technologies in treatment of degenerative-dystrophic bone diseases in children (Invited Paper)** [8926-104]  
I. A. Abushkin, V. A. Privalov, South Ural State Medical Univ. (Russian Federation); A. V. Lappa, Chelyabinsk State Univ. (Russian Federation); N. V. Noskov, E. A. Neizvestnykh, A. N. Kotlyarov, Y. G. Shekunova, South Ural State Medical Univ. (Russian Federation)
- 8926 3R **Bone graft complications: what can we do to prevent them?** [8926-105]  
R. Tandon, A. S. Herford, Loma Linda Univ. (United States)
- 8926 3S **RT-PCR standardization and bone mineralization after low-level laser therapy on adult osteoblast cells** [8926-106]  
F. R. C. do Bomfim, Univ. Federal de São Paulo (Brazil) and UNIARARAS (Brazil); V. R. G. Sella, Univ. Federal de São Paulo (Brazil); J. Q. Zanaga, N. S. Pereira, UNIARARAS (Brazil); V. L. A. Nouailhetas, H. Plapler, Univ. Federal de São Paulo (Brazil)
- 8926 3T **Radiofrequency ablation for oral and maxillofacial pathologies: A description of the technique (Invited Paper)** [8926-107]  
R. Tandon, T. W. Stevens, A. S. Herford, Loma Linda Univ. (United States)

---

## MUSCULOSKELETAL IMAGING AND DIAGNOSTICS I

---

- 8926 3V **Deep tissue imaging of microfracture and non-displaced fracture of bone using the second and third near-infrared therapeutic windows (Invited Paper)** [8926-109]  
L. A. Sordillo, Y. Pu, P. P. Sordillo, Y. Budansky, R. R. Alfano, The City College of the City Univ. of New York (United States)

---

## MUSCULOSKELETAL IMAGING AND DIAGNOSTICS II

---

- 8926 3Y **Infrared fiber optic probes for evaluation of musculoskeletal tissue pathology (Invited Paper)** [8926-112]  
M. Padalkar, C. McGoverin, Q. Onigbanjo, Temple Univ. (United States); R. Spencer, National Institutes of Health (United States); S. Barbash, E. Kropf, Temple Univ. School of Medicine (United States); N. Pleshko, Temple Univ. (United States)
- 8926 40 **Photonic hydrogel beads for controlled release of risedronate** [8926-114]  
D. K. Khajuria, D. Roy Mahapatra, Indian Institute of Science (India)

---

## BONE SPECTROSCOPY AND SURGERY

---

- 8926 41 **Attenuated total reflection Fourier transform infrared (ATR-FTIR) spectroscopic analysis of regenerated bone** [8926-115]  
C. Benetti, Instituto de Pesquisas Energéticas e Nucleares (Brazil); S. G. Kazarain, Imperial College London (United Kingdom); M. A. V. Alves, A. Blay, L. Correa, Univ. de São Paulo (Brazil); D. M. Zezell, Instituto de Pesquisas Energéticas e Nucleares (Brazil)
- 8926 42 **Spatial frequencies from human periosteum at different depths using two-photon microscopic images** [8926-116]  
L. A. Sordillo, L. Shi, S. Bhagroo, T. A. Nguyen, S. Lubicz, Y. Pu, Y. Budansky, N. Hatak, R. R. Alfano, The City College of the City Univ. of New York (United States)
- 8926 43 **Photoacoustic and ultrasound dual-modality imaging for inflammatory arthritis (Invited Paper)** [8926-117]  
G. Xu, D. Chamberland, G. Girish, X. Wang, Univ. of Michigan School of Medicine (United States)

*Author Index*

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Keynote I

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- 1 Optical Monitoring of Wounds  
**Bernard Choi**, Beckman Laser Institute and Medical Clinic  
(United States)
  - 2 Optical Therapeutics  
**Haishan Zeng**, The BC Cancer Agency Research Center (Canada)
  - 3 Confocal Microscopy  
**Haishan Zeng**, The BC Cancer Agency Research Center (Canada)
  - 4 Optical Spectroscopy  
**Lise Lyngsnes Randeberg**, Norwegian University of Science and  
Technology (Norway)
- Keynote II  
**Kristen M. Kelly M.D.**, University of California, Irvine School of Medicine  
(United States)
- 5 Photodynamic Therapy  
**Kristen M. Kelly M.D.**, University of California, Irvine School of Medicine  
(United States)
  - 6 Optical Microscopy and Optical Coherence Tomography  
**Kristen M. Kelly M.D.**, University of California, Irvine School of Medicine  
(United States)
  - 7 Model-Based Analysis of Optical Data  
**Anthony J. Durkin**, Beckman Laser Institute and Medical Clinic  
(United States)
  - 8 Wide-Field Functional Imaging  
**Jessica C. Ramella-Roman**, Florida International University  
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**Rudolf M. Verdaasdonk**, Vrije University Medical Center (Netherlands)

*Session Chairs*

- 9 Tissue Imaging I  
**Hyun Wook Kang**, Pukyong National University (Korea, Republic of)
- 10 Tissue Therapeutics  
**Nathaniel M. Fried**, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
(United States)  
**Ronald Sroka**, Laser-Forschungslabor (Germany)
- 11 Laser Lithotripsy  
**Hyun Wook Kang**, Pukyong National University (Korea, Republic of)
- 12 Tissue Imaging II  
**Kin Foong Chan**, Fourier Biotechnologies (United States)

**Part C    Optical Imaging, Therapeutics, and Advanced  
Technology in Head and Neck Surgery and  
Otolaryngology**

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(Korea, Republic of)  
**Jennifer E. Rosen**, Boston University (United States)  
**Henricus J. C. M. Sterenborg**, Erasmus MC (Netherlands)

### Session Chairs

- 1    Advanced Imaging and Novel Treatment Strategies in Otology  
**Justus F. Ilgner M.D.**, Universitätsklinikum Aachen (Germany)  
**Chung-Ku Rhee M.D.**, Dankook University Hospital  
(Korea, Republic of)
  
- 2    OCT for Functional Laryngeal Imaging  
**Brian Jet-Fei Wong**, Beckman Laser Institute and Medical Clinic  
(United States)
  
- 3    Basic Research and Engineering Concepts for Advanced Head and  
Neck Imaging  
**Brian Jet-Fei Wong**, Beckman Laser Institute and Medical Clinic  
(United States)  
**Justus F. Ilgner**, Universitätsklinikum Aachen (Germany)
  
- 4    Practical Results of Novel Imaging Technology in Head and Neck  
Lesions  
**Christian S. Betz**, Ludwig-Maximilians-Univ. Hospital München  
(Germany)  
**Waseem K. Jerjes**, University College London (United Kingdom)
  
- 5    PDT and Related Technology for Malignant and Pre-Malignant Head  
and Neck Lesions  
**Milind Rajadhyaksha**, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center  
(United States)
  
- 6    Current Concepts in Laser Surgery and Optical Tracking  
**Justus F. Ilgner**, Universitätsklinikum Aachen (Germany)  
**Christian S. Betz**, Ludwig-Maximilians-Univ. Hospital München  
(Germany)
  
- 7    Upper Airway OCT and Spectroscopy  
**Brian Jet-Fei Wong**, Beckman Laser Institute and Medical Clinic  
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**Christian S. Betz**, Ludwig-Maximilians-Univ. Hospital München  
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### *Session Chairs*

14 Spectroscopy

**Laura Marcu**, University of California, Davis (United States)

15 Myocardium and Therapy

**Kenton W. Gregory**, Oregon Medical Laser Center  
(United States)

16 Multimodality OCT

**Hongki Yoo**, Hanyang University (Korea, Republic of)

17 Light and Sound

**Antonius F. W. van der Steen**, Erasmus MC (Netherlands)

18 Advanced OCT

**Gijs van Soest**, Erasmus MC (Netherlands)

19 Tissue Characterization

**Jennifer E. Phipps**, The University of Texas Health Science Center at  
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20 Laser Speckle Imaging

**Seemantini K. Nadkarni**, Harvard Medical School (United States)

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**Rahul Tandon D.D.S.**, Loma Linda University (United States)

**Victor X. D. Yang**, Ryerson University (Canada)

### Session Chairs

- 21 Bone Surgery and Ablation  
**Andreas Mandelis**, University of Toronto (Canada)
- 22 Musculoskeletal Imaging and Diagnostics I  
**Rahul Tandon D.D.S.**, Loma Linda University (United States)
- 23 Musculoskeletal Imaging and Diagnostics II  
**Andreas Mandelis**, University of Toronto (Canada)
- 24 Bone Spectroscopy and Surgery  
**Andreas Mandelis**, University of Toronto (Canada)

## Introduction

The field of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery continues to be a challenging specialty for the application of novel diagnostic methods and therapeutic concepts. The contributions presented at the conference and issued hereafter reflect the responses to this challenge. The evolution of optical diagnostics, namely optical coherence tomography in its variants, fluorescence imaging, elastic scattering spectroscopy, confocal laser scanning microscopy has proceeded to an extent that most of the research presented is related to in vivo studies compared to more in vitro oriented projects of previous years. Moreover, many practical issues regarding the usability of optical diagnostic devices have been addressed, such as integrating OCT scanners in handheld otoscopes or the automated working distance adjustment for an OCT scanner in a conventional handheld laryngoscope. On the side of basic science, OCT scanners have become capable of scanning vibrational modes of the human tympanic membrane over a wide range of frequencies, thereby confirming data that have been postulated from finite element models in past years.

In addition to practical issues concerning the use of photonic imaging devices, increasing their predictive value compared to current diagnostic procedures and standards is of importance. Many workgroups have successfully combined variants of these imaging modalities in order to increase specificity and sensitivity in contrast to one method alone for differentiating benign, pre-malignant and malignant lesions of inner mucosal and outer skin surfaces of the head and neck. Co-registering and co-locating two-dimensional images from different methods and different orientation of the same lesion further helps to understand patterns of cellular growth in the context of pre-malignant and malignant neoplasms. This understanding enables the physician to tailor therapeutic regimes for the benefit of the patient, maximizing therapeutic security while minimizing loss of organ function and adverse effects.

In this context, the conference has been co-located with the annual scientific meeting of the Head and Neck Optical Diagnostic Society (HNODS) successfully for the second time. Within the scope of the society is also the propagation of minimally invasive therapeutic concepts in photodynamic therapy. Key research over the past years has been, among others, establishing and validating reliable dosimetry regimes for interstitial and superficial applications of PDT.

As photonics diagnostic and therapeutic technology will undoubtedly advance and mature in future years, one of the main challenges will be to propagate its use in clinical settings on a broad scale, generating a broad knowledge base for future research and increasing the quality of medical care in general for a greater public.

**Brian J. F. Wong**  
**Justus F. Ilgner**

