

Infectious Diseases

From TB to PCP, ATS 2012 brings together ID and



More than a century after the American Thoracic Society was founded by a group of doctors fighting TB, the Society, through its International Conference, continues to be one of the most important forums for clinicians and researchers working to prevent the spread of the disease and to treat those who become sick.

Although the TB topics at ATS 2012 will be radically different from those presented during the first conference in the midst of the deadliest epidemic known to humankind, it is clear that TB still presents a formidable challenge, with more than a hundred abstracts on the diagnosis, treatment and epidemiology of TB from around the world accepted for presentation at ATS 2012.

Today, however, the ATS International Conference is also a leading forum for discussing other infectious diseases that affect the lung, including pneumonia, non-tuberculous mycobacterial disease, fungal disease and HIV-associated pneumonias.

Pneumonia

“A lot of my pulmonary colleagues are very expert in the field of respiratory infection,” says Thomas File Jr., MD, who is chair of infectious disease at Summa Health System in Akron, Ohio. “In fact, most of the new information in the fields of hospital- and ventilator-acquired pneumonia has been acquired through the research of ATS members, so the best place to hear about it is at the conference.”

Michael Niederman, MD, a pulmonologist who is chair of internal medicine at Winthrop University Hospital on Long Island, also believes the conference provides “a great opportunity” for infectious disease-trained specialists and pulmonologists to share information.

“The ATS has really given pulmonologists a voice in adult respiratory infection,” he says. “And the conference is an exceptional forum because it draws so many international experts and the science is so strong.”

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pulmonary infection experts

ATS 2012 sessions of interest to specialists in adult respiratory infections:

- Going for the Cure: The Mycobacteria Case
- HIV-Associated Pulmonary Complications in the Era of Antiretroviral Therapy
- Probing the Lung Microbiome in Health & Disease
- Host Defense Mechanisms in Pulmonary Infection*
- Non-Tuberculous Mycobacteria Update: Guidelines Plus 5
- Revisiting the IDSA-ATS CAP Guidelines: Five Years Older, But Any Wiser?
- Difficult Clinical Problems in Pulmonary Infections*
- Case-Based Approach to Diagnosing & Treating Patients with NTM Lung Infections+
- Evidence-Based Innovations in TB Diagnosis & Treatment
- Year in Review: HIV, TB & Non-TB
- Critical Care in the Immunocompromised Host
- Mycobacterial & Fungal Diagnostics+
- Mini Symposium: Tuberculosis Host Defense
- Poster Discussion: TB in Vulnerable Populations

*Postgraduate course
+Workshop

By bringing infectious disease experts and pulmonologists together, adds Dr. File, the International Conference helps pave the way for collaborative, unified clinical guidelines that can improve the care of patients with respiratory infections.

HIV, NTM & fungal infections

HIV is another disease that has benefitted from the type of collaboration that will define much of the infectious disease presentations at ATS 2012. “For my area of clinical and research interest—PCP and the pulmonary complications of AIDS—the ATS is the number one meeting,” says Laurence Huang, MD, of the University of California, San Francisco.

The AIDS epidemic has increased clinical and scientific interest in other infections, most notably non-tuberculous mycobacteria, which commonly infects HIV-positive individuals, but is also on the rise in HIV-negative patients.

“Because almost everyone with NTM develops bronchiectasis, a disease of clinical and research interest to many ATS members,” explains Charles Daley, MD, chief of mycobacterial and respiratory infections at National Jewish Health, “the International Conference facilitates a valuable discussion between infectious disease and pulmonary experts interested in NTM and bronchiectasis.” ■



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