

# Supine PCNL Course at the Humanitas Institute

**Venue:** Milan, Italy. **Date:** 4-5 June, 2012. **Report by:** Mr Stuart Graham, Consultant Urological Surgeon, Whipps Cross Hospital, Barts Health, London; and Mr Azi Samsuddin, Consultant Urological Surgeon, Knowsley Hospital, Liverpool.

Whilst supine percutaneous nephro-lithotomy (PCNL) has been performed in mainland Europe for many years, it is in its infancy in the UK. Until relatively recently all PCNLs were done in a prone position because of worry about the colon falling between the kidney and the skin leading to an increased risk of perforation. Recently there has been a greater acceptance of supine PCNL and its benefits, including a multi-modal (combined antegrades and retrogrades) approach to remove stones elegantly and efficiently. We were able to visit Guido Giusti's unit in Rozzano just south of Milan and participate in his supine PCNL course run through the Humanitas Institute. After arriving we had a period of lectures on the theory behind the technique and a very comprehensive 'how to do it' guide with Guido in lecture format. After this, we had a fantastic meal with Guido and the faculty in a local restaurant to really get to know the members of the team who would be present in the operating theatre the next day.

We spent the whole of the next day in the operating theatre and Guido had laid on three challenging supine PCNLs and a flexible ureterorenoscopy for us. European rules necessitate not actually performing the operations but we were able to get right into theatre and stand up close to the patient. This aided understanding in the marking and positioning of the patients, where the tract was made and how the operation was performed safely and expertly. This was absolutely invaluable and we gained a huge insight into how to bring this procedure back to our respective hospitals.

Whilst we have both done extensive numbers of both prone PCNL and flexible ureterorenoscopy before, again even in the flexible ureterorenoscopy we learnt a few techniques which we have tried with some success back home.



Careful positioning of the patient, with preoperative marking is vital in this procedure, and this is only realised by getting up close in the operating room.



The authors (SG 2nd left, AS centre, with Dr Giusti, right, and his team).

Guido is a fantastic, personable teacher and now a good friend and we got huge amounts of experience from our time with him.

Eugenia Guillani who runs the logistics for the course was also superb and everything was laid on appropriately so that we could get to and from the hotel and from the

airport with the minimum of worry.

I cannot commend highly enough this course to anyone who wants to learn supine PCNL close up and look forward to Guido coming to see us in the future in the UK to give us more words of wisdom.

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