Information Leaflets for People with Dystonia

A new series of information leaflets are available from The Dystonia Society entitled: 'Dystonia explained: Your questions answered'; 'Making living with cervical dystonia easier'; and 'Making living with blepharospasm easier'.

The leaflets detail the causes of the dystonia, the treatment and provide advice about how to live with the condition. "It is extremely important that The Society provides an up to date information service for our members and we are grateful to Ipsen for sponsoring this project" said Mr Philip Eckstein, Chief Executive of The Dystonia Society.

Dystonia is a term used to describe a group of conditions characterised by uncontrollable muscle spasms affecting one or several parts of the body. The condition is thought to affect over 40,000 people in the UK. The Dystonia Society is dedicated to the support of all people affected by dystonia.

For further information contact The Dystonia Society, Tel.020 7490 5671, Email. info@dystonia.org.uk, Web. www.dystonia.org.uk

A New Entry Level for Confocal Microscopy

Responding to demand for basic, affordable, yet high quality confocal microscopy, Nikon Instruments have introduced the new e-C1 Confocal Microscope System. Entry-level buyers can now generate confocal fluorescence images with unsurpassed resolution and contrast. Using dual-channel simultaneous detection, the new e-C1 supports almost any imaging technique required, including simultaneous dual-channel fluorescence, DIC, time-lapse recording, and spatial analysis.

Nikon's continual development of optical and electronic technology ensures images are of the highest resolution, contrast, and brightness. To remove problems with crosstalk between channels when using simultaneous imaging, the e-C1 can be configured to capture sequential channel images frame by frame. Changing the filter to match fluorescent dyes is quick and simple.

Live 3D images can be captured effortlessly as the settings and procedures required can be viewed in a single window. Furthermore, using the simple and intuitive Graphical User Interface (GUI), experimental set-up, image analysis and processing can all be carried out by the click of a mouse.

For more information
Email: discover@nikon.co.uk

Results of the Tutankhamen Scan Revealed

Inside King Tutankhamun's tomb, Zahi Hawass, head of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, and a team of Egyptian researchers examine the 3,300-year-old mummy as it is removed from its sarcophagus prior to being CT-scanned.

Images generated by Siemens' mobile CT scanner enabled Egyptian experts to examine the cause of King Tutankhamen's death some 3,000 years ago. The mummy of Tutankhamen was discovered in 1922. An initial X-ray analysis in 1968 revealed a bone splinter embedded in the pharaoh's skull. This fact – coupled with the body's obviously hasty mummification and burial – led to speculation that Tutankhamen had died from head injuries, and possibly been murdered.

The completed analysis of the CT examination, based on images generated from a total of 1,700 slices, found no evidence for this theory. But the Pharaoh may have suffered from a broken thigh shortly before his death at the age of 19. Some members of the examination team say the Pharaoh may have died from an infection of this wound, because CT images revealed embalming resin inside it and there was no sign of a healing process. Other scientists on the team doubt that the injury was the cause of the king's death.

This examination is part of a research project being conducted by Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. The project also includes meticulous CT scans of a large number of other Egyptian mummies. Siemens has provided a special CT system, installed on a trailer for ease of transport, allowing the fragile remains of Egypt's ancient people to be studied with minimum disturbance.

For more information see www.siemens.co.uk/medical, or Tel. 01344 396317.

Images courtesy of National Geographic.

The 3,300-year-old mummy is prepared for scanning on January 5, 2005.

New Titles from Cambridge University Press

Cambridge University Press has published Clinical MR Neuroimaging edited by Jonathan H. Gillard. This book provides the reader with a thorough review of the underlying physical principles of diffusion imaging, perfusion imaging and spectroscopy, as well as comprehensive coverage of their clinical applications.

Also new is Neurodegenerative Diseases edited by Flint Beal. This major reference reviews the rapidly advancing knowledge of pathogenesis and treatment of neurodegenerative diseases in the context of a comprehensive survey of each disease and its clinical features. Covering basic science, diagnostic tools and therapeutic approaches, the book focuses on all aspects of neurodegenerative disease, including the normal ageing process. The dementias, prion diseases, Parkinson's disease and atypical parkinsonisms, neurodegenerative ataxias, motor neuron diseases, degenerative diseases with chorea, iron and copper disorders, and mitochondrial diseases, are all methodically discussed. In each case the underlying genetics, neuropathological and clinical issues are fully reviewed, making this the most complete as well as the most authoritative reference available to clinicians and neuroscientists. A special introductory price of £195.00 is on offer.

For more information contact Cambridge University Press on Tel. 01223 312393 or see www.cambridge.org/uk/

Carl Zeiss wins Life Science Industry Award

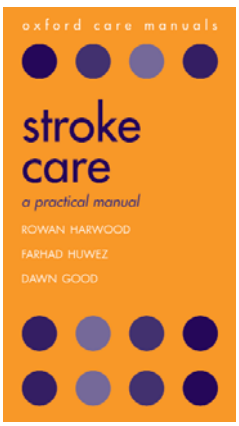
Carl Zeiss has won an award in the Image Analysis category at the Life Science Industry Awards – The Scientist's Choice. Carl Zeiss was a finalist in two of the Award's categories of excellence – Cell Biology Instrumentation and Image Analysis systems. They won the Image Analysis category and were runners-up in Cell Biology Instrumentation.

"The Scientists Choice is the ultimate accolade for any instrument manufacturer," says Aubrey Lambert, marketing manager at Carl Zeiss UK. "This is not an award for a single instrument, but recognition of the whole company's attributes across the board, from R&D and manufacturing to service and support. It demonstrates our commitment to innovation and excellence and our leadership in features and performance."

Carl Zeiss won the Readers' Choice Awards, the predecessor to the Life Science Industry Awards, in 2002 and 2003. Explaining the company's continuing success, Lambert says, "In other microscope companies it's still the physicists and engineers in the development team who decide what goes into the product. At Zeiss we have a multi-discipline approach. Our biologists, the people with the application edge, determine feature sets from the market-leading options given to them by the engineering team."

More details can be found at www.lifescienceindustryawards.com or Tel. 01707 871233.

Stroke Care: A practical manual



Oxford University Press has just published Stroke Care: A practical manual, by Rowan Harwood, Farhad Huwez and Dawn Good. It provides guidance on the management of stroke patients from initial diagnosis, through acute care, long term care and rehabilitation, to outcomes and secondary prevention. It is written in a clear how-to-do-it style and is produced in a portable pocketbook format so it can always be close at hand. The authors have all worked in stroke units and base their guidelines on the best available evidence and extensive experience. Subjects covered include the essential neurological aspects of stroke care, decision making and terminal care, psychological issues and much more.

Available in paperback at £19.95 (ISBN 0198529732). To order your copy, please telephone Oxford University Press on 01536 741727.

Siemens Enhanced Angiography Suite Applications

Neurological image acquired using DynaCT.

Siemens Medical Solutions has received 510K clearance from the FDA of DynaCT, an enhancement for C-arm angiography systems that allows soft tissue imaging in the angio suite. DynaCT is the first application that enables clinicians to perform Angiographic Computed Tomography (ACT) with the AXIOM Artis Flat Panel Detector (FD) technology systems, increasing diagnostic capabilities in the angiography laboratory.

Available as an enhancement to the AXIOM Artis dFA, dTA and dBA systems, DynaCT allows clinicians to perform ACT directly in the angio suite, therefore supporting more informed decision-making capabilities and treatment planning.

Additionally, with the ability to perform ACT directly on the AXIOM Artis FD system, DynaCT virtually eliminates patient transfers to other modalities for follow-up procedures. This reduces the need to move the patient out of the sterile environment, delivering a full "one-stop-shopping" capability.

DynaCT delivers soft tissue images that enable visualisation of tissue differentiation in the range of 10 HU (Hounsfield Units), giving the ability to visualise soft tissue abnormalities such as abdominal tumours as well as cerebral hemorrhaging.

For more information see www.siemens.co.uk/medical, or Tel. 01344 396317.

New Brain and Tissue Research Bank

In March the MRC-funded Edinburgh Brain and Tissue Bank for Investigation of Sudden Death was launched, run by Jeanne Bell, Professor of Neuropathology at Edinburgh University.

The project aims to build a brain and tissue bank over the next two years as a resource for researchers. The bank will also collect disease-free tissues and organs – an essential part of the research process into conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

A crucial feature is the appointment of full time staff to ensure good communications with families of sudden death victims. A dedicated Research Nurse will liaise with families asking for their approval and consent for the collection of tissue at the time of autopsy. It is claimed that research into sudden death has suffered in recent years after organ retention controversies in the UK. New rules mean doctors need to seek more informed consent from relatives. It is hoped that tissue can be taken from up to 1,000 post mortems conducted at the hospital each year.

For more information contact the MRC on Tel. 020 7636 5422.

Carl Zeiss wins Microsoft Competition

Carl Zeiss has won first place in Microsoft's 2004 .NET Solutions Competition. The Light Microscopy division of Carl Zeiss AG, Goettingen, together with the Sohard AG, Fürth Software Company, won the "Best .NET Project" in the .NET Solutions Competition organised by Microsoft.

The winning firmware and operational software were designed for a new generation of Carl Zeiss microscopes launched in 2004. Axio Imager is a modular system for digital fluorescence microscopy, featuring IC2S objectives (Infinity Contrast & Colour Corrected System) that optimise image quality and maximise contrast in all techniques and special fluorescence filters that increase excitation intensity and reduce exposure times. Axio Imager systems range from entry-level system to high-end multi-user systems and are fully configurable depending on user requirements.

In making the award, Microsoft recognised the achievement in developing software that enables flexibility whilst meeting the increasing scientific challenges of providing brilliant images, excellent 3D quality, precision and ease of use.

For further information Tel. 01707 871233 or see www.zeiss.co.uk