



SCHOOL

Course Report

ESTRO-ILROG Course on Haematological Malignancies

18-21 April 2021, online

Course directors:

- *Lena Specht, MD, PhD, Department of Oncology and Haematology, Rigshospitalet, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*
- *Joachim Yahalom, MD, Department of Radiation Oncology, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA*

Could you please briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Kukka Heiskala, MD, PhD, radiation oncologist. I work in the radiation therapy section of the Helsinki University Hospital Comprehensive Cancer Centre. My main interests are the treatment of lymphomas and of head and neck cancer.

Why did you choose to attend this course?

I wanted to strengthen my knowledge of the radiotherapy of lymphomas and other haematological malignancies. I think a course organised by the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) and the International Lymphoma Radiation Oncology Group (ILROG) is a great way to gain up-to-date knowledge on the subject and to get to know the experts in the field. As this was an online course, unfortunately, it was not possible to connect with the other attendees.

What aspects of the course were the most interesting and why?

I think the most interesting parts were the contouring exercises and the discussions with the faculty. They deepened my understanding of how and why certain techniques or doses were used, how the guidelines were made, and the logic behind the recommendations. This is something that cannot be completely explained in articles and guidelines. It is also interesting to know the subjects on which the experts do not agree.

Did the course activities improve your knowledge and skills in the relevant subject?

The activities were well planned and organised. I think I am now more aware of modern techniques and better able to validate my arguments in multidisciplinary meetings.

Did the course meet your expectations? If so, how?

The course surpassed my expectations. I was expecting a comprehensive review of the radiation oncology of haematological malignancies, but I was not sure if the online format would be optimal for the course. Nevertheless, the lively discussions, the enthusiasm of the faculty and the active participation of the attendees made the experience very interactive and interesting.

List three important 'takeaways' following the course.

Personally, I valued the contouring assignments, which clarified the treatment planning. I also learned a lot about the treatment of haematological malignancies other than lymphomas, particularly regarding the special considerations that are required in the treatment of the spleen. The review of current medical treatments was also very informative.

How would you encourage someone who has never been to an ESTRO Course to join this course next year/ in two years?

The course was a fast and effective way to gain insight into the treatment of these diseases. The ambiance was very welcoming and the use of the chat for us to ask questions worked well. The lectures were easy to follow and interactive, and as the schedule was tight, the possibility to return to the recordings afterwards was important. I recommend the course to anyone interested in the radiotherapy of haematological malignancies.



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