Support was provided solely from institutional and/or departmental sources.
Saturday began with the traditional forum, “Breakfast with the Experts.” SOAP faculty members held case discussions in a problem-based learning format. Members attended the Gerard W. Ostheimer Lecture, “What’s New in Obstetric Anesthesia.” After review of an extensive reference list of more than 800 articles, the 2003 literature relevant to obstetrics and obstetric anesthesia was presented. The second poster review followed.

The Fred Hehre Lecture was presented and was entitled “Maternal Mortality: What Have We Learned and How Do We Use It?” The root causes of maternal obstetric disasters and the potential changes in obstetric anesthesia practice that could impact these deaths were discussed.

After lunch, a Panel Discussion, “Practical SOAP Labor Analgesia: Alternatives to Conventional Epidural and Combined Spinal Epidural Analgesia in Labor” was presented. The history of continuous spinal labor analgesia was reviewed, and the recent multicenter trial evaluating the safety and efficacy of continuous spinal labor analgesia using 28-gauge spinal catheters was discussed. In addition, the history of parenteral labor analgesia was reviewed, and the ideal parenteral opioid labor analgesic was described. The use and selection criteria for “intrathecals” (single-injection spinals for labor analgesia) were also reviewed. Nonpharmacologic methods of labor analgesia were discussed, including hydrotherapy, hypnotherapy, cutaneous sterile water injections, doulas, acupuncture/acupressure, position changes, touch, massage, music, and aromatherapy.

The six Best Paper Presentations followed the Panel Discussion. Y. Ginosar (Hadassah Hebrew University School of Medicine, Jerusalem, Israel) received the Best Paper Award for work entitled “Antepartum Chronic Epidural Therapy (ACET) Using Ropivacaine Improves Uteroplacental Blood Flow in Preeclampsia and Intrauterine Growth Retardation.”

The Research Hour followed with a discussion of current and novel research themes in obstetric anesthesia. These themes were based on 2004 SOAP research abstracts and posters. The moderators presented critical appraisals of these works with the goal of understanding the potentials and limitations of the new approaches to obstetric anesthesia research. The annual SOAP Banquet concluded the day.

On Sunday, the Pro/Con Debate “Ephedrine, Rather Than Phenylephrine, Is the Vasopressor of Choice to Prevent and Manage Spinal-induced Hypotension” took place. One debater argued against the use of ephedrine, citing evidence that ephedrine use is associated with a greater incidence of fetal acidosis than phenylephrine. Conversely, an argument in favor of the use of ephedrine was presented, citing that the effects of ephedrine were transient and of minimal or no clinical significance, and that the long-term use of ephedrine in obstetrics is a testament to the safety of this drug.

The meeting concluded with Poster Review #3. For the first time at a SOAP meeting, an entire poster session was dedicated to case reports and was entitled “You Did What? The Best Case Reports of the Year.” In the closing ceremonies, members were invited to mark their calendars for the 37th Annual Meeting of SOAP in Palm Desert, California, May 4–7, 2005.

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