

Amid-Lichtenstein Hernia Clinic UCLA, Los Angeles, California (USA)

During the Swiss Hernia Days in 2018 I won the 1st Swiss Hernia Days Fellowship.

My host was Prof. David C. Chen, Clinical Director of the famous Lichtenstein-Amid Hernia Clinic at UCLA, Los Angeles, California. David generously invited me and my family to stay at his house in Santa Monica Bay in LA and so we extended the fellowship trip with a week of holidays in California. In preparation for my fellowship, he asked me to think about the operations and patients I would like to see. I had some techniques in mind and discussed my ideas with my team and prepared a list. Of course, getting to know how a proper Lichtenstein operation is done at the Lichtenstein clinic was one of the main points on my list.



Dr. Bettina Herrmann with Prof. David C. Chen

My fellowship in Los Angeles finally took place in June 2019. I joined David for five straight days and was allowed to accompany him during his ward rounds, all his operations and team meetings. He showed me his surgical techniques such as Lichtenstein, Shouldice-repair, TEP, hiatal/umbilical/parastomal hernias and many general surgery procedures. Most impressive to me was a re-TEP for chronic groin pain after primary TEP repair with neurectomy and removal of the old mesh. By seeing David's structured approach to all his surgeries, I automatically started reflecting my own practices in Switzerland. I understood, that



a structured discussion of the surgical strategy beforehand considering the pros and cons of the different approaches and the expected complications may help to improve the surgical care of our hernia patients. Also, setting the right indication and choosing the right techniques seemed more difficult to me. Here I learned a lot by joining David's decision-making conversations with his team and his patients. Most impressive was the structured access for example to patients with chronic groin pain, which is a diagnostic and therapeutic challenge. This is one of David's surgical specialties, in which he gets referrals from all over the US. I could always ask and discuss thoughts and ideas with him.

The Swiss Hernia Days Fellowship was a perfect opportunity for me to learn from one of the best hernia surgeons in the world and to immerse into the hernia world at one of the world-renowned hernia centers. Thanks again to Henry and Philipp for giving me the chance to be part of such an experience, which has changed my daily surgical practice immediately. And last but not least I would like to thank David C. Chen for his hospitality, his kindness and for taking a whole week of his precious time educating me.



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