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Society for Clinical Trials Selects the Management of Myelomeningocele Study (MOMS) as “Trial of the Year”

Study of prenatal versus postnatal repair of myelomeningocele was recognized at Society’s 2012 Annual Meeting in Miami, May 22

The Management of Myelomeningocele Study earned recognition as “Trial of the Year” by the Society for Clinical Trials (SCT) as an important clinical trial that overcame extraordinary difficulties and produced remarkable results. The trial was presented by Catherine Spong, Elizabeth Thom and Jody Farrell during the SCT’s 2012 Annual Meeting in Miami on Tuesday, May 22.

Each year since 2008, the SCT has presented an award to the randomized clinical trial published (either electronically or in print) in the previous year that best fulfills the following standards:

It improves the lot of humankind;

It provides the basis for a substantial, beneficial change in health care;

It reflects expertise in subject matter, excellence in methodology, and concern for
study participants;

It overcomes obstacles in implementation;

The presentation of its design, execution, and results is a model of clarity and intellectual soundness.

Nominations for “Trial of the Year” came from SCT members, investigators, and interested scholars internationally. The selection committee was comprised of Lawrence Friedman, Kay Dickersin, KyungMann Kim, Steven Goodman, Jonathan Kimmelman, and Thomas Laage. The MOMS trial was judged the Trial of the Year over extremely stiff competition.

Published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in March 2011 (N Engl J Med 2011;364:993-1004) the MOMS trial compared prenatal versus postnatal surgery for myelomeningocele (spina bifida). The trial was stopped because of superior results with the prenatal surgery after 183 patients had been enrolled

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(out of a planned 200). The primary outcome of fetal or neonatal death or the need for placement of a cerebrospinal shunt by one year of age occurred in 68% of those undergoing prenatal surgery and 98% of those undergoing postnatal surgery.

The MOMS trial faced great difficulties in recruiting women who had recently received a devastating diagnosis, entailing counseling and providing considerable information and resources about options and ethical considerations. Those randomized to prenatal surgery needed to remain close to the participating clinical center. The effort required to overcome the many obstacles in the conduct of this important trial was a key factor in its selection as Trial of the Year.

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About the Society for Clinical Trials: The Society for Clinical Trials, created in 1978, is an international professional organization dedicated to the development and dissemination of knowledge about the design, conduct and analysis of government and industry-sponsored clinical trials and related health care research methodologies. Visit www.sctweb.org.

About the Trial of the Year: Find a list of past [Trials of the Year](#) on the SCT website.

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