

Editorial

Professor Yücel Tümer, MD; a legend, mentor in children's orthopaedics in Turkey

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Passing of Professor Yücel Tümer MD, on January 30, 2021 at the age of 82 in Ankara deeply saddened the Turkish Orthopaedic community. He was not only a mentor, the founder of the Turkish Society of Children's Orthopaedics (TSCO), a friendly colleague, a highly skilled surgeon and an extraordinary teacher, but also an excellent husband and father.

Professor Tümer was born in Balıkesir in 1939. He was graduated from the Ankara University Faculty of Medicine in 1962. He fulfilled his Orthopaedics and Traumatology training in Gülhane Military Medical Academy between the years 1965 and 1969. After passing the ECFMG exam, he made his second formal Orthopaedics training in Pittsburgh University, PA, USA under the supervision of Professor Albert B. Ferguson Jr., MD, between the years 1972 and 1975. Following his training in Pittsburgh, he returned to Turkey, unfortunately, he only worked for 8 years in a Faculty of Medicine as a faculty member (1976-1978; Gülhane Military Medical Academy, 1978-1982; Ankara University Faculty of Medicine, 2005-2007; Ufuk University Faculty of Medicine). He made significant contributions to the education of hundreds of medical students and tens of Orthopaedics and Traumatology residents in those years. Besides, he made invaluable contributions to the professional achievements and academic careers of many Turkish orthopaedic surgeons until his death.

Professor Tümer worked in private practice for many years. However, he never lost his academic skills and orientation. His private office in Ankara was always a meeting point where almost all pediatric orthopaedic surgeons used to visit for case discussions and consultations, journal article discussions, exchange ideas on scientific studies and scientific article and textbook writings. It wouldn't be wrong to call his private office in Ankara as "Professor Yücel Tümer's Academy of Children's Orthopaedics".

The two most prominent contributions of Professor Tümer to the field of children's orthopaedics in Turkey occurred in prevention and treatment of developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) and institutional foundation of the TSCO. First, Professor Tümer introduced the medial approach open reduction in DDH

to Turkey as he was the fellow of Professor Ferguson who initially described the Ferguson's approach in 1973 (1). Mid- and long-term results of his patients treated by using this approach were published in prestigious journals (2, 3). He then led numerous prospective multicentric clinical studies. An algorithm concerning the surgical treatment of DDH under the age of 18 months was developed under the light of these scientific studies (4, 5). This algorithm was named as "posteromedial limited surgery" or "Ankara approach", adopted by many national and international medical centers and cited in several articles as well as in the latest editions of the classical textbooks (6, 7). Second, Professor Tümer started to work on the foundation of the TSCO in early 1990's. TSCO was officially founded in 1994 and he was the first president of the society between 1994 and 1996 and he again became the president of TSCO between 2000 and 2002. During his presidency, he made significant efforts on the international recognition of children's orthopaedics in Turkey, so that TSCO became an alliance society of Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA) in 1996. He encouraged the Turkish orthopaedic surgeons to submit and present papers in international meetings particularly in European Paediatric Orthopaedic Society (EPOS) and POSNA annual meetings. He was initially an active member then an emeritus member of EPOS. Without his initial tireless efforts on the international recognition of children's orthopaedics in Turkey and encouraging attempts for the active participation of his younger Turkish colleagues to the international meetings, it might not be possible for the Turkish orthopaedic surgeons to be nominated and elected for prestigious positions in international pediatric orthopaedic societies including the presidency of EPOS. Besides, under the leadership of Professor Tümer, 15 Turkish orthopaedic surgeons attended a one-week long infantile hip ultrasonography hands-on course, directed by Professor Reinhard Graf in Stolzalpe, Austria in December 1996. This course could be considered as the starting point of the "nationwide newborn hip screening programme in Turkey". Organization of "nationwide training courses on infantile hip ultrasonography and early management of DDH" was immediately initiated following this course. He constantly emphasized the importance of prevention of DDH in Turkey

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and perhaps the first important national review article on this topic was published in 1997 (8). The introduction of “nationwide newborn hip screening programme in Turkey” in July 2013 made one of his dreams come true. He conducted a nationwide cross-sectional study reporting perhaps the most accurate data on the occurrence rate of DDH in Turkey (9).

Rest in peace our dear mentor, teacher and colleague. Your invaluable contributions to the children’s orthopaedics in Turkey will forever be remembered.

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