



Zoom On: Manu Malbrain, Ziekenhuis Netwerk Antwerpen



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Dr. Manu Malbrain is the medical hospital director of the ZNA "[Ziekenhuis Netwerk Antwerpen](#)" Stuivenberg and [ZNA St-Erasmus](#) hospitals in Antwerp, Belgium since 2013. He is the manager and director of the Medical and Surgical ICU, the High Care Burn Unit and a hyperbaric oxygen chamber of the ZNA Stuivenberg/St-Erasmus. He is the founding President and Executive Committee member since 2004 and the Treasurer of the [World Society on Abdominal Compartment Syndrome](#) (WSACS at www.wsacs.org). Together with Niels Van Regenmortel, he is co-founder of the [International Fluid Academy](#) and co-chaired the first four iFAD meetings at the end of November each year.

1. What are your key areas of interest and research?

- Haemodynamic monitoring
- Organ-to-organ interactions
- Abdominal hypertension and abdominal compartment syndrome

- Fluid management and capillary leak
- Burn care

2. What are the major challenges in your field?

- Integration of all variables for each individual patient is getting more and more difficult
- The progression of digitalisation and informatisation in healthcare may lead to a loss of common sense; this must however always prevail
- Over the last years there seems to be less and less evidence-based medicine for the daily things we do in the ICU; all seems lost and a new era of eminence-based medicine and expert opinion may get a place as long as we clinically focus on the patient and his family.

3. What is your top management tip?

Verba volant et scripta manent (words fly and writings stay), but always think twice about what you would do in your position if you were to start anew.

4. What would you single out as a career highlight?

The finalisation of my PhD and a book on abdominal compartment syndrome whilst still being active fulltime as a bedside ICU physician, followed by becoming the Medical Director of the Ziekenhuis Netwerk Antwerpen, ZNA Stuivenberg and ZNA St-Erasmus hospitals.

5. If you had not chosen this career path you would have become a...?

I have no regrets, but if not a doctor, probably an artist.

6. What are your personal interests outside of work?

My wife Bieke and our 3 sons, Jacco, Milan and Luca, travel to distant countries, exotic food, painting, biking, swimming.

7. Your favourite quote?

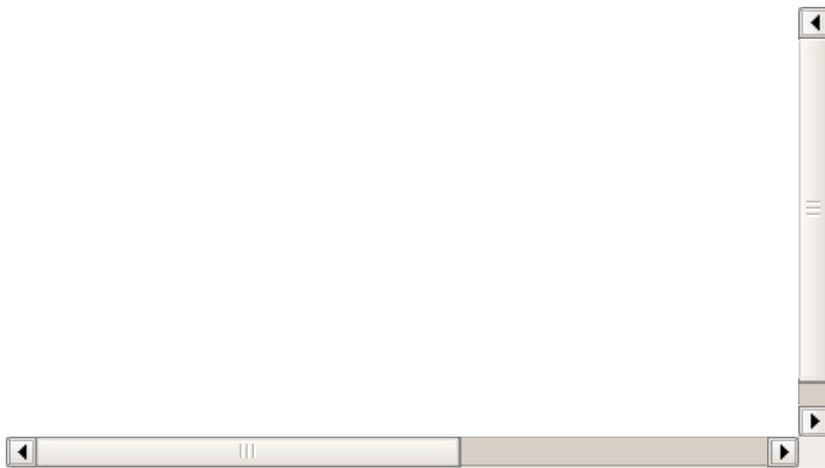
- The proof of the pudding is in the eating
- Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity... and I am not so sure about the universe (A. Einstein)

Dr. Malbrain graduated as MD from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium in 1991 and qualified as a critical care physician in 1996.

He is actively involved in the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM), and chaired the Working group on abdominal problems (WGAP) within the POIC section (2009-2013). He finished the Patient Acute Care Training (PACT) module on abdominal problems together with Jan De Waele. He was the Scientific programme Chair together with Michael Sugrue of the 2nd World Congress on Abdominal Compartment Syndrome, Noosa, Australia in 2004. He was chairman of the 3rd WCACS in Antwerp, Belgium, March 22-24 in 2007.

He has studied the effects of raised intra-abdominal pressure (IAP) in general ICU patients for the last 20 years. Besides IAP, his favourite topic is less invasive (haemodynamic) monitoring and fluid management, and he enjoys his active involvement in bedside teaching and education of medical trainees and students. He is a member of the Medical Advisory Board of Pulsion Medical Systems for the last 10 years. In 2003 he was the first ESICM Chris Stoutenbeek Award winner in Amsterdam with a study protocol on different intra-abdominal pressure measurement methods and he successfully defended his PhD doctorate's thesis in 2007 on the same topic (KU Leuven). He is author and co-author of more than 250 peer-reviewed articles, reviews, editorials, book chapters and two complete books on ACS.

ISICEM 2015: I-I-I Interview with Prof. Malbrain on Fluid Management



Further reading

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Malbrain MLNG (2013) [How to understand organ-organ interactions](#). ICU Management, 13(1): 10, 12-4.

Malbrain MLNG, Cordemans C, Van Regenmortel N (2012) [Fluid overload is not only of cosmetic concern \(Part II\): results from a meta-analysis and practical approach](#). ICU Management, 12(2): 34, 36-7.

Malbrain MLNG, Van Regenmortel N (2012) [Fluid overload is not only of cosmetic concern: exposing a new hypothesis](#). ICU Management, 12(1): 30-3.

Malbrain M, De laet I (2009) [The polycompartment syndrome. Part Two: From cardiac to thoracic - the other compartment syndrome](#). ICU Management, 9(3): 18-9, 42.

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