

AO Trauma Europe Masters Course— Orthoplastics in Extremity Trauma

September 14–15, 2026

Bern, Switzerland

PROGRAM



Home to
trauma and
orthopedics

Mission

The AO's mission is promoting excellence in patient care and outcomes in trauma and musculoskeletal disorders.

The AO principles of fracture management

1



Fracture reduction and fixation to restore anatomical relationships.

2



Fracture fixation providing absolute or relative stability, as required by the "personality" of the fracture, the patient, and the injury.

3



Preservation of the blood supply to soft-tissues and bone by gentle reduction techniques and careful handling.

4



Early and safe mobilization and rehabilitation of the injured part and the patient as a whole.

Welcome

Dear participant,

Welcome to the AO Trauma Europe Course—Orthoplastics in extremity trauma, which is planned and delivered to meet your needs using a competency-based curriculum approach and the AO's seven principles for high-quality education.

AO Trauma's innovative approach to education has been further strengthened as a result of the successful collaboration with the AO Education Institute in the application of state-of-the-art educational concepts in curriculum planning and all faculty development programs.

This course is one of our many educational activities for providing lifelong learning, from the Residents Education Program through to specialized Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for practicing surgeons and clinicians.

We believe that your active engagement in this course will result in improved care for your patients. Your current level of knowledge and skills will be challenged by the activities and throughout the entire event. We are confident that the combination of education principles and relevant content from our curriculum, as well as your interaction with colleagues and expert faculty will provide an effective learning experience that meets your needs.

This course is part of an overall competency-based educational program that includes many other activities and resources for self-directed learning. The educational activities in each program are developed by an international taskforce of clinical experts and educationalists and made available to you through the Education section of www.aotrauma.org.

We hope you enjoy the course and benefit from the networking opportunities it provides for you to share experiences with your colleagues.

Sincerely yours,



Rodrigo Pesantez
Chairperson AO Trauma
Education Commission



Wa'el Taha
Chairperson AO Trauma
International Board

If you enjoy the experience during your course and would like to stay in touch with the organization and its international network of surgeons, we invite you to become a member of AO Trauma. The benefits of membership, including options to get involved in new opportunities that advance trauma care are described at www.aotrauma.org.

Goal of the event

The AO Trauma Europe Masters Courses 2026 address current concepts and state-of-the-art treatment options in orthopedic trauma. Each course covers one or more topics and has been conceived based on the common and critical patient problems related to the specific subject.

Target participants

Surgeons involved or interested in the orthoplastic approach of open fractures and management of complications resulting fracture treatment, including soft tissue breakdown and soft tissue defect, as well as soft tissue and bone infection. Participants must be able to communicate well in English.

Event description

The course is delivered using a combination of exercises with anatomical specimens, case presentation, small group discussions, and summary lectures.

All activities are moderated by an expert faculty in a highly interactive learning environment. Participants are encouraged to discuss the cases and content in an open manner and to share their own cases and experiences.

Learning objectives

At the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Recognise complex injuries and identify factors contributing to outcome
- Apply orthoplastic concepts to assess soft tissue and bone injuries
- Plan timely and appropriate surgery using orthoplastic concepts to the management of open fractures
- Refer to current evidence and its value in injury management
- Apply AO Principles to the management of open fractures

Chairpersons



Yves Harder

Department of Plastic,
Reconstructive and Aesthetic
Surgery and Hand Surgery
Centre Hospitalier Universitaire
Vaudois (CHUV)
Lausanne, Switzerland



Philipp Stillhard

Department of Surgery, Clinic for
Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery
Kantonsspital Chur
Chur, Switzerland

Faculty

Martin Clauss	Center for Musculoskeletal Infections (ZMSI), Department for Orthopaedics and Trauma Surgery, University Hospital Basel	Basel, Switzerland
Radu Olariu	Department of Plastic & Hand Surgery, Inselspital Bern, University of Bern	Bern, Switzerland
Rik Osinga	Center for Musculoskeletal Infections, Department of Plastic, Reconstructive, Aesthetic and Hand Surgery, University Hospital Basel	Basel, Switzerland
Herman Frima	Department of Trauma Surgery, Northwest Hospital Group, Alkmaar	The Netherlands

Keynote speaker

Monday

September 14, 2026

07:30–08:00 Participant registration

08:00–08:05 Welcome and introduction to the course Y Harder, P Stillhard

Module 1 Initial care of the injury

08:05–08:20 How to deal with limited resources TBD

08:20–08:40 Open fractures—acute management: The view of the trauma surgeon P Stillhard

08:40–08:55 Open fractures—acute management: The view of the plastic surgeon R Osinga

08:55–09:10 Compartment syndrome H Frima

09:10–09:25 Degloving injuries R Olariu

09:25–09:50 Coffee break

Module 2 Management of open fractures

09:50–13:00 **Anatomical specimen laboratory 1** All faculty

- Myo-cutaneous gastrocnemius flap (medial, lateral)
 - Soleus / hemi-soleus flap
 - Peroneus brevis flap
 - Medial plantar artery flap (instep-flap)
 - Decompression fasciotomy (optional)
 - Medial sural artery perforator flap (optional)
 - Other perforator flaps based on posterior tibial and fibular artery (optional), reversed sural neuro-cutaneous flap (optional)
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13:00–14:15 Lunch break

14:15–15:30 **Discussion group 1** All faculty

Assessment of soft tissue and bone injury— timing and prioritization of surgical care

[Group A and Group B](#)

Module 3

Management of the severely injured extremity

15:30–15:45	Managing vascular injuries—diagnosis and treatment	P Stillhard
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15:45–16:00	Managing bone injury	P Stillhard
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16:00–16:15	Managing soft-tissue injuries and defects: Why, what and when?	Y Harder
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16:15–16:30	Managing unsalvageable extremities	R Olariu
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16:30–16:45	Coffee break	
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16:45–18:00	Discussion group 2 Open fractures—fracture management and soft tissue closure respectively reconstruction Group A and Group B	All faculty
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Tuesday

September 15, 2026

Module 4

Management of bone and soft-tissue loss in extremity trauma

08:00-08:15	Managing bone loss—The view of the orthopaedic surgeon	M Clauss
08:15-08:35	Managing bone loss—The view of the plastic surgeons: Different concepts	R Osinga, R Olariu
08:35-08:50	Dead space management	Y Harder
08:50-09:05	The role of negative pressure wound therapy	R Olariu
09:05-09:20	Non-surgical treatment of fracture related infection (FRI)	M Clauss
09:20-09:40	Coffee break	

09:40–13:00	Anatomical specimen laboratory 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anterolateral thigh (ALT) flap• Fibula flap• Local flaps, “keystone” flaps, perforator flaps• Gracilis flap, vascularized medial femur condyle flap (optional)• Saphena flap (optional)• Bridging external fixation—knee and ankle with safe corridors (optional)	All faculty
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13:00–14:00 Lunch break

Module 5

Management of complications (e.g. infection, bony non-union, flap failure)

14:00-14:15	Surgical management of FRI and concomitant soft tissue problems	R Osinga
14:15-14:30	Surgical management of delayed and non-union of fractures	H Frima
14:30-14:45	Flap failure—management protocols	R Olariu
14:45-15:00	Alternative non-flap based alternative closure techniques in extremity trauma	Y Harder
15:00–16:00	Discussion group 3 Managing complications: FRI, delayed and bony non-union, flap related-complications Group A and Group B	All Faculty
16:00–16:15	Summary of the day, evaluation and closing remarks	Y Harder, P Stillhard

Event information

Organization

AO Foundation

Noémie Ringgenberg
Clavadelstrasse 8
7270 Davos Platz, Switzerland
Phone: +41799307270
E-mail: noemie.ringgenberg@aofoundation.org

Participants' contact

Laila Plattner
E-mail: aoges.emea@aofoundation.org

Registration fee

CHF 1'900

Cancellation policy

50% until 30 days before the event.
No refund thereafter.

Online registration

[Link](#)



Language

English

European CME accreditation

An application has been made to the UEMS-EACCME® in Brussels for CME accreditation of this event.

Swiss accreditation

An application has been made to Swiss Society for Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery, Swiss Orthopaedics, Society of Surgery.

Venue

University of Bern

Institute of Anatomy
Bühlstrasse 26
CH-3012 Bern

[Website](#)



General information

Event organization compliance

In certain countries where AO has no office but offers educational events, the AO cooperates with third party companies to conduct local organization and logistics, as well as to communicate with participants in the local language. In these cases, the AO has put rules and guidelines in place to ensure that this cooperation has no impact on the curricula, scientific program, or faculty selection.

AO funding sources

Unrestricted educational grants from different sources are collected and pooled together centrally by the AO.

All events are planned and scheduled by local and regional AO surgeon groups based on local needs assessments. We rely on industrial/commercial partners for in-kind support to run simulations/skills training if educationally needed.

Evaluation guidelines

All AO events apply the same evaluation process, which includes pre- and post-event online evaluation and on-site written questionnaires. These evaluation tools help ensure that AO continues to meet your training needs.

Disclosures and conflicts of interest

Disclosure information and potential conflicts of interest (COI) can be viewed at the event webpage.

Intellectual property

Event materials, presentations, and case studies are the intellectual property of the event faculty. All rights are reserved. For more information, please see: www.aofoundation.org/legal.

Recording, photographing, or copying of lectures, practical exercises, case discussions, or any course materials is absolutely forbidden.



The AO Foundation reserves the right to film, photograph, and audio record during their events. Participants must understand that in this context they may appear in these recorded materials. The AO Foundation assumes participants agree that these recorded materials may be used for AO marketing and other purposes and made available to the public.

Security

There will be a security check at the entrance of the building. Wearing of a name tag is compulsory during lectures, workshops, and group discussions.

No insurance

The event organization does not take out insurance to cover any individual against accidents, theft, or other risks.

Use of mobile phone

Mobile phone use is not allowed in the lecture halls and in other rooms during educational activities. Please be considerate of others by turning off your mobile phone.

Sponsor(s)

We thank our major industry partner DePuy Synthes for contributing key in-kind support (materials and logistics), without which this event would not be possible, as well as an unrestricted educational grant.



Principles of AO educational events

1. Academic independence

Development of all curricula, design of scientific event programs, and selection of faculty are the sole responsibilities of volunteer AO network surgeons. All education is planned based on needs assessment data, designed and evaluated using concepts and evidence from the most current medical education research, and reflects the expertise of the AO Education Institute (www.aofoundation.org). Industry participation is not allowed during the entire curriculum development and planning process to ensure academic independence and to keep content free from bias.

2. Compliance to accreditation and industry codes

All planning, organization, and execution of educational activities follow existing codes for accreditation of high-quality education:

- Accreditation Criteria of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, US (www.accme.org)
- ACCME Standards for Commercial Support: Standards to Ensure Independence in CME Activities (www.accme.org)
- Criteria for Accreditation of Live Educational Events of the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (www.uems.eu)

Events that receive direct or indirect unrestricted educational grants or in-kind support from industry also follow the ethical codes of the medical industry, such as:

- Medtech Europe Guidelines on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals (www.medtecheurope.org)
- AdvaMed Code of Ethics on Interactions with Health Care Professionals (www.advamed.org)
- Mecomed Guidelines on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals (www.mecomed.com)

3. Branding and advertising

No industry logos or advertising (apart from the AO Foundation and its clinical divisions) are permitted in the area where educational activities take place.

Sponsors providing financial or in-kind support are allowed to have a promotional booth or run activities outside the educational area with approval from the event chairperson.

4. Use of technologies and products in practical sessions

In case practical sessions are chosen as an educational method to educate skills, the technologies and products used have been approved or reviewed by the AO Technical Commission—a large independent group of volunteer surgeons developing and peer-reviewing new technology on behalf of the AO Foundation.

Any technology and/or products used in the practical sessions of this event have been found suitable to serve the defined educational purposes.

This does not imply any statement about its use and performance in actual clinical scenarios.

More information on the AO Technical Commission can be found on the AO's website: www.aofoundation.org/tc.

5. Personnel

Industry staff members are not permitted to interfere with the educational content or engage in educational activities during the event.