Imaging of hepatic hypervascular tumors & clinical implications
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Matthanja was born on September 6th, 1983 in Zwolle, the Netherlands. She attended high school at the Agnieten College location Carolus Clusius College, with a mix of interests: biology, science, history and gymnastics. At the age of 17 she enrolled in medical school at the Rijks University Groningen (RUG). During her college years Matthanja worked as a medical research assistant at Pharma Bio Research, as a student assistant for the department of Internal Medicine and the department of Ophthalmology of the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG), and worked as an assistant for a family practitioner in Groningen.

The first encounter with research was the IMPROVE trial at the department of Internal Medicine at the UMCG. A side project resulted in a joint publication of Internal Medicine and Ophthalmology. Matthanja did her internship at the Isala Klinieken Zwolle, with a senior internship in traumatology (a collaboration between general surgery and orthopedics). After graduating medical school she continued working at the department of surgery at the Isala Klinieken. Ten months later she took leave to work with Doctors on the Move in Bolivia where she worked as a general physician on mobile missions to the countryside and on small outpost clinics. After her return to the Netherlands she continued her work at the Isala Klinieken until she took the opportunity for a PhD program at the Academic Medical Center Amsterdam under supervision of Professor Thomas M. van Gulik, HPB surgeon. During this period Matthanja had the opportunity to present her research at international congresses and was also given the opportunity to publish her photos in a book celebrating the 30 year anniversary of the Academic Medical Center.

In July 2013 she started working at the Intensive Care Unit of the Rode Kruis Ziekenhuis, Beverwijk.