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EDITOR'S CHOICE



Perhaps the hardest decision a doctor has to take is when not to treat a patient with a life threatening condition. On p 978 Professor Brian Williams calls for a wider debate about life sustaining protocols. Prospective evidence from the British regional heart study on the importance of various lipids (p 998) suggests that measuring high density lipoproteins in addition to total cholesterol concentration is of marginal value in screening and preventive programmes. A mildly reassuring study from Finland (p 995) suggests that the amount of radioactive fallout after the accident at Chernobyl was not high

enough to cause fetal damage in children born at term. The arguments on the government's NHS review and general practitioners' contracts rumble on, and Professor David Morrell suggests an alternative contract (p 1005) while Professor John Howie examines quality and the use of time in general practice. With sexual assault a major police anxiety Northumbria's women's police doctors scheme offers a new approach to examining victims. Finally, for doctors who have time Clifford Hawkins provides a lifebelt on how to survive a dinner (p 1024).