



Maternal deaths, p 1175



Computed tomography screening, p 1182



F Scott Fitzgerald's medical classic, p 1182



Sleeping and Dreaming, p 1216

EDITORIALS

- 1163 Orlistat over the counter**
Has a minimal effect on obesity and is no substitute for a healthy lifestyle, says Gareth Williams
» *Research* p 1194
- 1164 Mortality in men admitted to hospital with acute urinary retention**
Is highest in men with comorbid conditions, so multidisciplinary care is needed, says Katia M C Verhamme and Miriam C J M Sturkenboom
» *Research* p 1199
- 1165 Recognising and responding to acute illness in patients in hospital**
Leadership, culture change, education, support, and regular auditing are key, say Kathryn M Rowan and David A Harrison
» *Practice* p 1210
- 1167 Influence of pharmaceutical funding on the conclusions of meta-analyses**
Original data are sound, but conclusions should be interpreted with caution, says Richard A Epstein
» *Research* p 1202
- 1168 Implementing practice based commissioning**
Is happening slowly but not necessarily surely, say Richard Q Lewis, Natasha Curry, Ruth Robertson, and Nicholas Mays

LETTERS

- 1169 Role of the doctor; Graduate medical school entry; Atrial fibrillation**
- 1170 Investigating renal impairment; Quality and outcomes framework**

NEWS

- 1171 GPs are struggling to match the services they buy with the health needs of local people**
US doctors are not following ethical guidelines
- 1172 UK government pledges £370m to improve cancer care**
Blame culture is still a problem for patient safety
Gene therapy trial to restart, despite patient's death
- 1173 Mortality from measles fell by 91% in Africa and by 68% worldwide from 2000 to 2006**
- 1174 GMC strikes Southall off medical register for serious professional misconduct**
Pay rise next year is not likely to top 2%
- 1175 Deaths related to obesity take over from suicide as leading cause of maternal death**
NHS doctors and finance staff have a negative view of each other, says Audit Commission
- 1176 Dignitas is forced to offer its services from a former factory**
Mistakes in deciding fetal sex from ultrasonography can lead to domestic abuse
Dying patients are often not told of closeness of death
- 1177 Most US emergency departments poorly prepared to treat children, study shows**

SHORT CUTS

- 1178 What's new in the other general journals**

HEAD TO HEAD

- 1180 Is infant male circumcision an abuse of the rights of the child?**
Geoff Hinchley says yes; Kirsten Patrick says no

FEATURE

- 1182 Better safe than sorry?**
A review this week estimated that computed tomography is responsible for 2% of all cancers in the US. Zosia Kmietowicz asks whether the increasing private use of this technique for screening is a good idea

OBSERVATIONS

LIFE AND DEATH

- 1185 The road to hell...** Iona Heath

ETHICS MAN

- 1186 A perforated education** Daniel K Sokol

ANALYSIS

- 1187 Patients' charters and health responsibilities**
We all have responsibility for our health, the health of others, and to the organisations that provide health care. But, as Harald Schmidt describes, specifying and formalising these duties can create ethical problems

RESEARCH, CLINICAL REVIEW, AND PRACTICE

See next page

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

PERSONAL VIEW

- 1213 Can we have some courage in leadership, please?**
David M Lewis

COLUMNISTS

- 1214 Everything changes but you?** Des Spence
Christmas party games James Owen Drife
1215 Getting tar struck Theodore Dalrymple

MEDICAL CLASSICS

- 1215 Tender is the Night** Giskin Day

REVIEW OF THE WEEK

- 1216 Sleep is the best medicine** Colin Martin

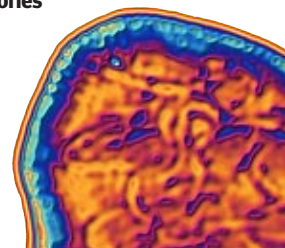
OBITUARIES

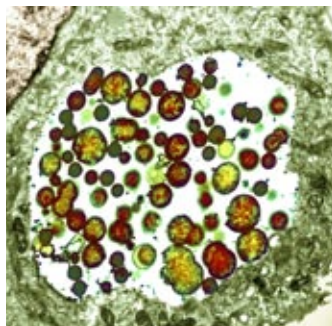
- 1217 Ronald Albert Fisher; Duncan Buchanan MacGregor; Donald Melvin MacKay; Edmund Mervyn Rosser; Barnett Shanson; Rasiah Somasundaram Thiagarajah**

MINERVA

- 1218 "Neurasthenia" and other stories**

Mortality from measles falls, p 1173





Evaluating the *Chlamydia* Rapid Test, p 1190

SOUTHAMPTON GENERAL HOSPITAL/SPL



Mortality in men with acute urinary retention, p 1199

ST BARTHOLOMEWS HOSPITAL/SPL



Clinical review: medical aspects of male circumcision, p 1206



Preventing cardiac emergencies in hospitals, p 1210

GRAPES/MICHAUD/SPL

RESEARCH

1190 New point of care *Chlamydia* Rapid Test—bridging the gap between diagnosis and treatment: performance evaluation study

Testing with self collected vaginal swabs was acceptable to most women in sexual health and STI clinics, with results within 30 minutes and overall sensitivity and specificity of 83.5% and 98.9%
 Lourdes Mahilum-Tapay, Vivian Laitila, James J Wawrzyniak, Sarah Alexander, Alison Swain, Penelope Barber, Ines Ushiro-Lumb, Beng T Goh, Catherine Ison, Helen H Lee

1194 Long term pharmacotherapy for obesity and overweight: updated meta-analysis

Orlistat, sibutramine, and rimonabant reduce weight by less than 5 kg on average, and adding them to lifestyle advice should be guided by patients' preferences and comorbidities as well as local drug costs and availability

Diana Rucker, Raj Padwal, Stephanie K Li, Cintia Curioni, David C W Lau

» Editorial p 1163

1199 Mortality in men admitted to hospital with acute urinary retention: database analysis

Mortality in men admitted to hospital with acute urinary retention is high and increases strongly with age and comorbidity. As many as one in four men admitted to hospital with acute urinary retention will die within a year

James N Armitage, Nokuthaba Sibanda, Paul J Cathcart, Mark Emberton, Jan H P van der Meulen

» Editorial p 1164

1202 Financial ties and concordance between results and conclusions in meta-analyses: retrospective cohort study

Of 124 meta-analyses on antihypertensive drugs those with financial ties to one drug company were no more likely than others to have results favouring that company's drugs, but were more likely to have favourable conclusions

Veronica Yank, Drummond Rennie, Lisa A Bero

» Editorial p 1167

CLINICAL REVIEW

1206 Medical aspects of male circumcision

Padraig Malone, Henrik Steinbrecher

PRACTICE

1210 Quality improvement report: six year audit of cardiac arrests and medical emergency team calls in an Australian outer metropolitan teaching hospital

Cardiac arrests in hospital often indicate delayed or suboptimal clinical care. This article reports on three initiatives in a hospital to improve the use of a medical emergency team to manage patients whose condition is deteriorating

Michael Buist, Julia Harrison, Ellie Abaloz, Susan Van Dyke

» Editorial p 1165

RESEARCH PUBLISHED AHEAD OF PRINT

Physical interventions to interrupt or reduce the spread of respiratory viruses: systematic review

Tom Jefferson, Ruth Foxlee, Chris Del Mar, Liz Dooley, Eliana Ferroni, Bill Hewak, Adi Prabhala, Sree Nair, Alex Rivetti

Antithrombin III in critically ill patients: systematic review with meta-analysis and trial sequential analysis

Arash Afshari, Jørn Wetterslev, Jesper Brok, Ann Møller

Early life determinants of physical activity in 11 to 12 year olds: cohort study

Calum Mattocks, Andy Ness, Kevin Deere, Kate Tilling, Sam Leary, Steven N Blair, Chris Riddoch



BMJ AND BMJ CAREERS COMBINED: UK READERS

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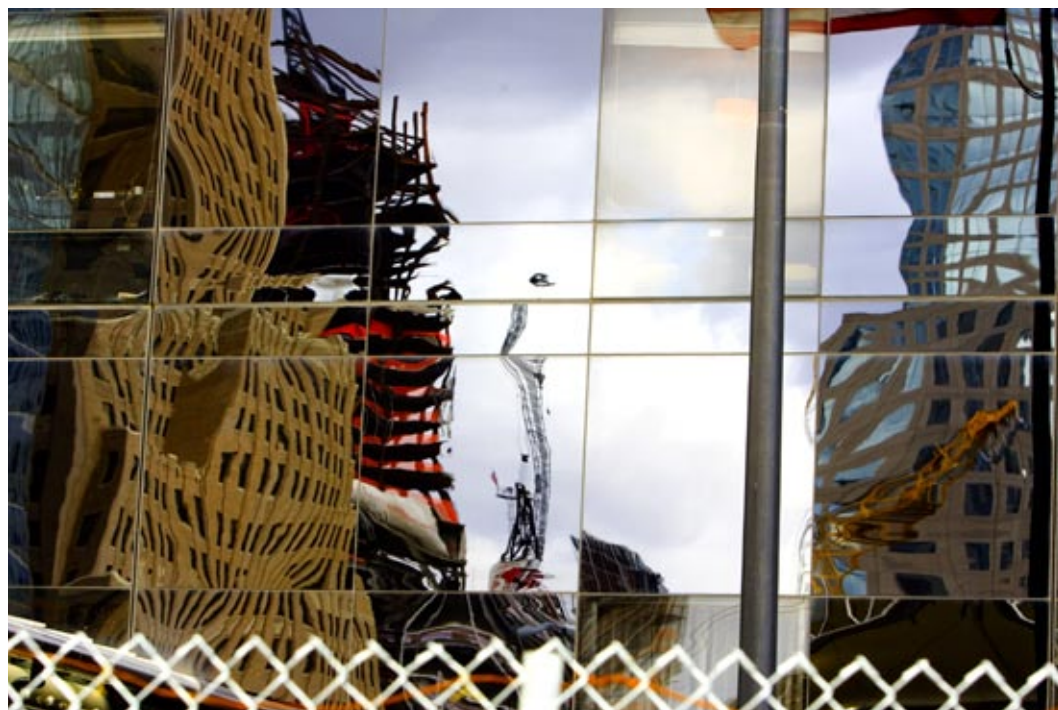
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PICTURE OF THE WEEK

A crane and other buildings are reflected as construction continues at the World Trade Center site in New York city. A recent controversial ruling by the city's chief medical examiner limits the official definition of victims of the terror attacks on 9 September 2001 to people who died on that day and not to people who have since died because of inhalation of toxic dust.

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

0.4 MJ Average energy expended a day by taking Alli (orlistat) over the counter, equivalent to 10-20 minutes of sex (**Editorial p 1163**)

30% Proportion of men who have been circumcised (**Head to Head p 1181**)

5 Odds ratio of favourable conclusions about antihypertensives in meta-analyses that have financial ties to a drug company (**Research p 1202**)

15 000 Years since circumcision originated (**Clinical Review p 1206**)

2% Top likely pay rise for NHS staff next year (**News p 1174**)

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

“It is not economically viable for [poor] entrants [to medical degrees] to have done a previous degree” (Letters p 1169)

“Chlamydia trachomatis is the most prevalent sexually transmitted infection worldwide” (Research p 1190)

“[With] appropriate educational support a medical emergency team can significantly reduce ... cardiac arrests” (Practice p 1210)

“Primary care trusts in England are failing ... their local communities” (News p 1171)

“Evidence from clinical trials is being shamelessly extrapolated across time ... population subgroup, and ... condition” (Observations p 1185)



ON THE COVER

Circumcision: right or wrong?

Head to Head, p 1180

Clinical review, p 1206

PLUS

In this week's *BMJ Careers*

Medicine is the bridge to peace
Crisis what's Crisis?

Turning a problem into an
opportunity

15 Minute interview with the
England women's football team
doctor

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Covering ourselves

The front cover of this week's *BMJ* is the first to rely solely on words since we redesigned the journal at the beginning of this year, and even since we introduced regular cover pictures in 2002. The dangers of trying to find one clear, recognisable image for a topic like circumcision—which receives two quite different treatments this week, as the subject of our Head to Head debate (p 1180) and our Clinical review (p 1206)—might seem obvious. Fortunately, the typographic possibilities inherent in the word itself are visual enough.

Some readers might ask why the *BMJ* has to be visual at all, especially those who still lament the passing of the blue covers that, until five years ago, displayed each week's full list of contents. One obvious answer is that medical journals have to compete in an increasingly crowded and visual marketplace, vying for attention not just with each other but with other types of publications and media. Another answer is that medicine itself is extremely visual.

But perhaps a better answer, and one in the spirit of this week's personal view (p 1213), is that designing a cover out of the mass of material that goes to make up a weekly journal is a form of leadership. When David Lewis, a general practitioner in Worcestershire, was a senior medical officer in the Royal Air Force medical branch, he realised that listing guidelines and protocols for junior staff to follow was a form of cowardice. "The courageous leader not only writes down the wisdom, but accepts responsibility for its assimilation and implementation," he writes. Dr Lewis eventually abandoned the guidelines and protocols and held regular team meetings instead. We use a parallel strategy with our front covers: instead of listing everything and leaving readers to find their own way through it, the *BMJ* seeks to prioritise, to summarise, and to set the agenda.

Last month we asked readers to tell us what they thought of the *BMJ*'s 2007 covers. Comments varied from "They're terrific—congratulations" to "Getting uglier and uglier over time." This last response might have been prompted by the cover of 24 February, which featured a close-up of a child's nose sutured after a dog bite. It caused a few complaints at the time and was the least popular in the survey, suggesting that although doctors are used to seeing things that other people find unpalatable, some prefer not to have to do so at home. Other dislikes on covers included brand names and "glossiness." The two most popular covers were a London underground map used to illustrate the complexity of impact factors (17 March) and a pair of red boxing gloves (20 October) for a research paper on boxing and brain damage.

What front cover ingredients did readers say they liked? "Something simple with the minimum of clutter"; "something that catches my eye"; something "striking." We hope we have achieved all three this week.

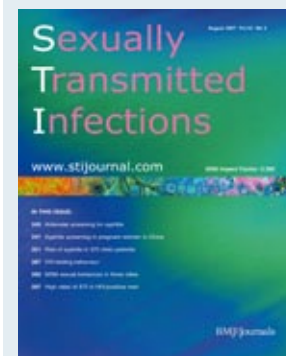
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