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Diarrhoea still kills, p 1227



John Hilton Edwards, p 1269



Prostate cancer, p 1225

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Evidence shows that it does not improve outcomes and increases the risk of bleeding, says A Torossian, J Graf, and A Bauhofer
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- 1220 Treatment of displaced intracapsular hip fractures in elderly patients**
Arthroplasty improves function and has a lower reoperation rate than internal fixation, says Martyn Parker
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- 1221 Regulation of drugs for children in Europe**
New legislation encourages the drug industry to produce high quality transparent research, says Imti Choonara

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Obesity is a growing public health problem. Rory Watson reports on European initiatives to tackle it and wider health problems

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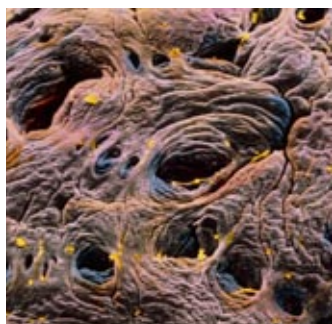
- 1270 How divorce effects the environment, and other stories**

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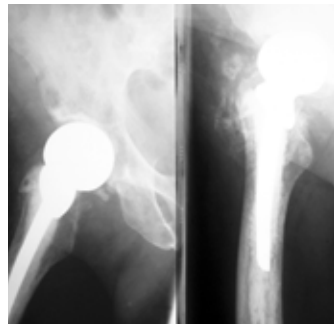
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Screening for coeliac disease, p 1244



Treating intracapsular displaced femoral neck fractures, p 1251



Clinical review: cystic fibrosis, p 1255



Guidelines for atopic eczema in children, p 1263

RESEARCH

1244 Population screening for coeliac disease in primary care by district nurses using a rapid antibody test: diagnostic accuracy and feasibility study

Finger prick testing in 6 year olds at a routine school check-up yielded results in 5-10 minutes with 78.1% sensitivity and 100% specificity, and picked up previously undiagnosed children

Ilma R Korponay-Szabó, Katalin Szabados, Jánosné Pusztai, Katalin Uhrin, Éva Ludmány, Éva Nemes, Katri Kaukinen, Anikó Kapitány, Lotta Koskinen, Sándor Sipka, Anikó Imre, Markku Mäki

1248 Antithrombin III in critically ill patients: systematic review with meta-analysis and trial sequential analysis

In 20 trials with 3458 patients antithrombin III did not significantly affect mortality or length of stay in hospital or in intensive care but significantly increased the risk of bleeding events, with a relative risk of 1.52

Arash Afshari, Jørn Wetterslev, Jesper Brok, Ann Møller

» Editorial p 1219

1251 Hemiarthroplasty or internal fixation for intracapsular displaced femoral neck fractures: randomised controlled trial

In women aged 83 on average and followed up for two years hemiarthroplasty provided better quality of life and ability to carry out activities of daily living

Frede Frihagen, Lars Nordsletten, Jan Erik Madsen

» Editorial p 1220

CLINICAL REVIEW

1255 Cystic fibrosis

Jane C Davies, Eric W F W Alton, Andrew Bush

PRACTICE

1260 Rational imaging: Investigating rectal bleeding

Conventional colonoscopy is considered the optimal investigation for rectal bleeding; however, this article explores the use of virtual colonoscopy as a new investigative technique

David Burling, James E East, Stuart A Taylor

1263 Guidelines: Management of atopic eczema in children aged up to 12 years—summary of NICE guidance

One of a series of *BMJ* summaries of new guidelines, which are based on the best available evidence; they highlight important recommendations for clinical practice, especially where uncertainty or controversy exists

Sue Lewis-Jones, Moira A Muggleston, on behalf of the Guideline Development Group

RESEARCH PUBLISHED AHEAD OF PRINT

Effect of European Clinical Trials Directive on academic drug trials in Denmark: retrospective study of applications to the Danish Medicines Agency 1993-2006

Louise Berendt, Cecilia Håkansson, Karin Friis Bach, Kim Dalhoff, Per Buch Andreasen, Lene Grejs Petersen, Elin Andersen, Henrik Enghusen Poulsen

Influences on older people's decision making regarding choice of topical or oral NSAIDs for knee pain: qualitative study

Dawn Carnes, Yasir Anwer, Martin Underwood, Geoff Harding, Suzanne Parsons, on behalf of the TOIB study team



BMJ AND BMJ CAREERS COMBINED: UK READERS

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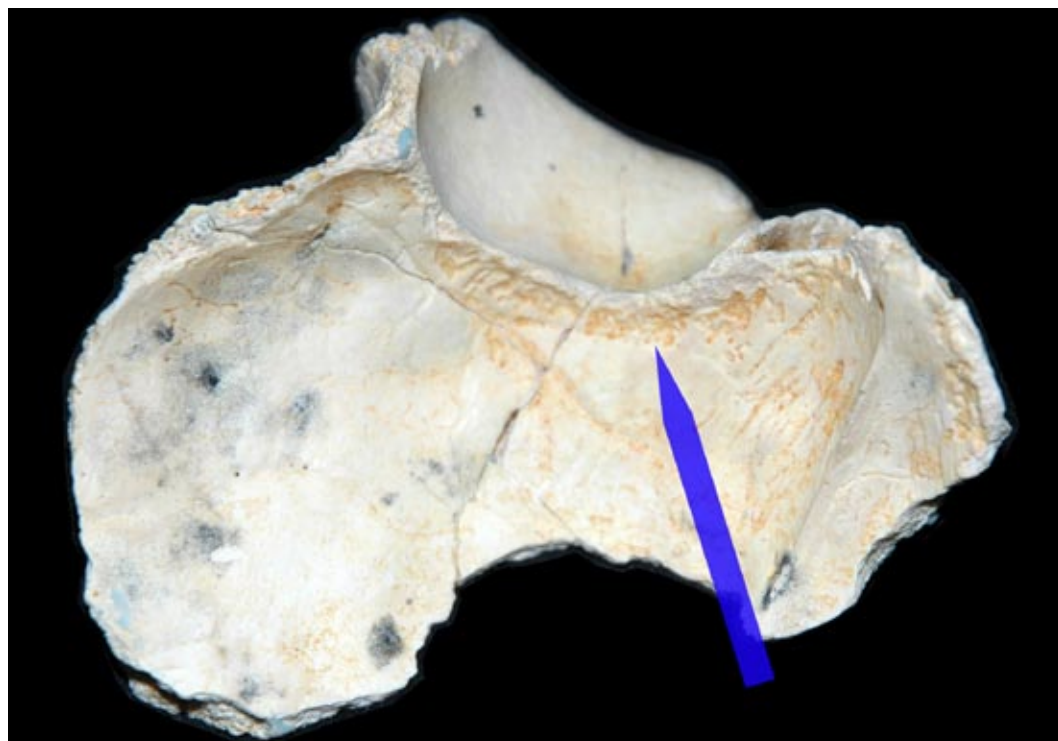
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JOHN KAPPELMAN, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

The inside of a skull bone of a young male *Homo erectus*, newly discovered in western Turkey. The blue arrow points to tiny lesions 1-2 mm in size found along the rim of bone just behind the right eye orbit. The lesions may have been caused by tuberculous meningitis and, at 500 000 years old, would make it the earliest case of tuberculosis known in humans.

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

>1.5m Number of children killed by diarrhoeal diseases each year (News p 1227)

5-10% Reoperation rate in patients with displaced femoral neck fractures treated with hemiarthroplasty compared with a rate of 30-40% in patients treated with internal fixation (Research p 1251)

508 The codon at which the deletion of phenylalanine occurs in 70% of people with cystic fibrosis (Clinical Review p 1255)

1 in 5 Proportion of children affected by atopic eczema in the UK (Practice p 1263)

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

“Displaced fracture of the intracapsular proximal femur has been termed the ‘unsolved fracture’”

(Editorials p 1220)

“Only 5% of East German doctors worked as ‘unofficial spies’ for the state—we should be so lucky”

(Letters p 1226)

“A career in NHS management is like a game of snakes and ladders”

(Body Politic p 1239)

“I’d love it if the government had an overall plan for the NHS but there isn’t. It knows nothing about management—just policies.”

(Review of the Week p 1268)



ON THE COVER

Obesity: We should look at the bigger picture

See Features pp 1236, 1237

PLUS

In this week's *BMJ* careers

CME in Ireland

Carol Black: things they didn't teach you at medical school

Time off: polo player



EDDIE MULHOLLAND/REX

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

Reasons for optimism

Why would we publish a clinical review of a condition that affects only about 7000 people in the United Kingdom? We reject many articles because the condition described is "too rare for the *BMJ*." Why is cystic fibrosis (p 1225) an exception? Much has changed for patients with the condition. They live longer—the predicted survival for babies born in the 21st century is now more than 50 years; the standard treatment is changing; and the focus is now on screening newborns. Therefore non-specialists are more likely to encounter patients with cystic fibrosis than they did in the past. All of which is good news.

This week's *BMJ* provides solutions for several clinically important problems. A systematic review (p 1248) finds that antithrombin III should not be given to critically ill patients. This is good news because not using this expensive drug could save money, and it might save lives too because the drug increases the risk of bleeding. A randomised controlled trial (p 1251) finds that the solution to treating a displaced intracapsular fracture of the femoral neck is arthroplasty, not internal fixation. The treatment of this "unsolved fracture," as Martyn Parker calls it in his editorial (p 1220), has been controversial for 50 years, so it is good to have an answer. And a feasibility study (p 1244) finds that a population screening programme for coeliac disease run by nurses detects patients who were not picked up during routine clinical care.

Elsewhere, too, the news is good. WHO has launched a campaign—"Make medicines child size"—to make drugs safer for children (p 1227). This will hopefully reduce the use of unlicensed drugs in children and make more drugs available to them. The UK government is to spend £105m on improving stroke services, which is aimed at preventing 1600 strokes and cutting 6800 deaths and disabilities a year (p 1231). And £520m is to be ring fenced for a reform that will provide older people and those with disabilities with individual budgets and more control over their social care budget (p 1231). All this has put me in a positive frame of mind and made me optimistic even about modernising medical careers, and I find myself convinced by Martin Marshall, who says that the MTAS cloud has a silver lining and the Tooke report is a window of opportunity (p 1222).

But in case you thought that all is well even with the NHS, you should read what Gerry Robinson says about it in a documentary (p 1268). Robinson, a management guru, was charged with reviving Rotherham General Hospital in South Yorkshire and met with some success. But he said on his return, "I just despair of this stuff. . . It reminds me of Russia, 800 million light bulbs but no shirts. You have the central dogma driving it but no logic."

Finally, the story I enjoyed most (p 1233) told who lived longer—old master sculptors or old master painters? Sculptors it is, and a possible reason is the greater amount of physical work involved in their art. Clearly the sensible thing to do this Christmas is to bin the watercolour paint and brushes and buy a hammer and chisel.

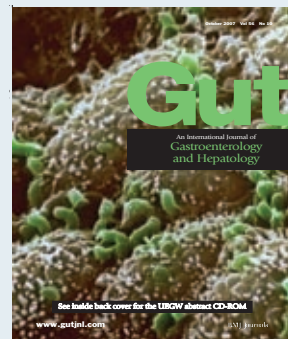
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