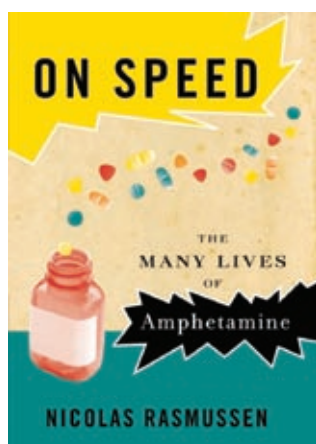




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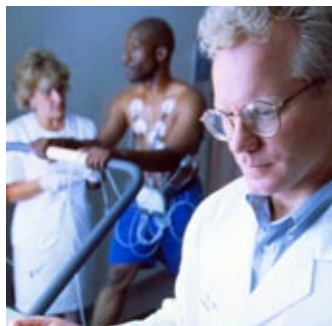
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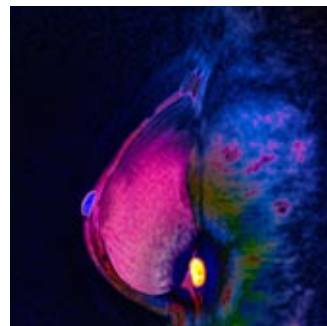




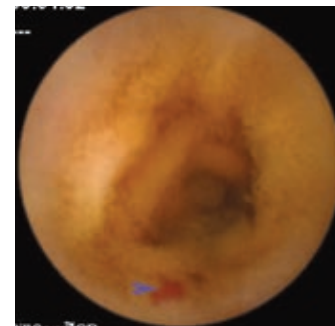
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- 88 Cardiovascular evaluation, including resting and exercise electrocardiography, before participation in competitive sports: cross sectional study**  
Four fifths of people barred for health reasons from sport in Italy, where pre-screening for heart disease is a legal requirement, were picked up by exercise electrocardiography in this five year national study  
Francesco Sofi, Andrea Capalbo, Nicola Pucci, Jacopo Giuliattini, Francesca Condino, Flavio Alessandri, Rosanna Abbate, Gian Franco Gensini, Sergio Califano  
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- 92 Association between muscular strength and mortality in men: prospective cohort study**  
Muscular strength, measured during bench presses and leg presses, seems to add to the protective effect of cardiorespiratory fitness in reducing mortality risk  
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- 96 Neuromuscular training and the risk of leg injuries in female floorball players: cluster randomised controlled study**  
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Kati Pasanen, Jari Parkkari, Matti Pasanen, Hannele Hiilloskorpi, Tanja Mäkinen, Markku Järvinen, Pekka Kannus
- 99 Secular decline in mortality from coronary heart disease in adults with diabetes mellitus: cohort study**  
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Ane Cecilie Dale, Lars Vatten, Tom Ivar Nilsen, Kristian Midthjell, Rune Wiseth

## 103 Imported malaria and high risk groups: observational study using UK surveillance data 1987-2006

Despite the availability of highly effective preventive measures, the burden from falciparum malaria has steadily increased, mostly among travellers returning from seeing friends and family in West Africa

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### 111 Rational imaging: Investigating occult gastrointestinal haemorrhage

This article explores the radiological investigations available to diagnose recurrent blood loss from the gastrointestinal tract

H R Dalton, G F Maskell

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### Prognosis in patients with recent onset low back pain in Australian primary care: inception cohort study

BMJ, doi:10.1136/bmj.a171

Nicholas Henschke, Christopher G Maher, Kathryn M Refshauge, Robert D Herbert, Robert G Cumming, Jane Bleasel, John York, Anurina Das, James H McAuley

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## PICTURE OF THE WEEK

The one in five US doctors who refuse to see drug companies' sales representatives can now display a sign in their offices to announce the fact. See News on [bmj.com](http://bmj.com) (doi: 10.1136/bmj.a711).

## THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

**50%** Rise in incidence of breast cancer in Great Britain in the past three decades (Clinical Review p 107)

**0.23** Odds ratio of chemoprophylaxis use in UK travellers with malaria who had visited family compared with those who had not (Research p 103)

**4** Reasons for anti-doping in sport (Analysis p 85)

**47** Delegates from five countries who attended a surgical conference in the virtual reality of Second Life (Letter p 68)

**2 in 3** Patients with multiple sclerosis who can't access neurological rehabilitation services (News p 69)

## THE WEEK IN QUOTES

**“Barium studies cannot detect the small mucosal lesions that usually cause bleeding in the small bowel”** (Practice p 111)

**“Muscular strength is independently [inversely] associated with death from all causes and cancer in men aged 20-82”** (Research p 92)

**“The natural river flow available to dilute what comes out of sewage works in the UK is one of the lowest in Europe”** (Feature p 80)

**“The beat generation fully embraced amphetamine”** (Review of the Week p 115)

**“The media are littered with images that link smoking with success and power”** (News p 75)



## EDITOR'S CHOICE

## Olympic dreams



**Editorial, p 61**  
**Research, p 88**

Many enjoy sport, yet few achieve sporting excellence: most are ordinary people doing ordinary things on local playing fields on a wet Saturday. In this issue we focus on the health risks and benefits of exercise. No glamour, excitement, glorious triumphs, or multimillion pound endorsements—just some simple messages for your patients and mine. And there's more to follow in the *BMJ* in coming weeks.

Sudden cardiac death in sport is a headline grabber. Pressure groups seek screening, distraught parents look for solutions, but science struggles to find evidence. Most of what we know of mass testing comes from Italy, where medical examination before participation in organised sport is mandatory. We already know that physical examination alone is ineffective; now Sofi and colleagues in Florence find in a large cross sectional study of all ages that, of those ultimately excluded from competitive sport, 79% had normal resting electrocardiographs (p 88). Drezner and Khan (p 61) say the evidence supports systematic screening before participation. The study was preliminary and cross sectional, with no data on later outcomes, harms (such as unnecessary anxiety), or cost effectiveness, so it may be too early to say that. Does sport for all mean exercise electrocardiographs for all? What do you think?

Much of current knowledge on the benefits of exercise comes from major epidemiological studies of endurance-type aerobic activity. Using a database built over years at the Cooper Clinic in Dallas, Jonatan Ruiz and colleagues find that muscular strength is associated with reduced all cause and cancer mortality even after adjustment for cardiovascular fitness (p 92). Whatever exercise you do, do something.

Sport and the randomised controlled trial are unlikely bedfellows. Calls for intervention studies are often met with excuses and pleading for special circumstances from the sporting community. On p 96 Pasanen and colleagues show that a neuromuscular training programme in Finland prevented non-contact leg injuries in women playing floorball (a hockey-like sport). The unwritten message is that it is possible to do randomised trials with large sporting organisations, teams, and individual athletes. No more excuses.

Elite sport has an unpleasant truth lurking in the background: on the brink of another Olympic games, the world holds its breath for the next doping scandal. Bengt Kayser and Aaron Smith (and the many signatories who agree with them) take a new and realistic look at the problem (p 85). Anti-doping policy has failed, they believe; our current approach is flawed and we need a more pragmatic approach. Dominic Wells raises the spectre of genetic engineering in athletes, suggesting that some athletes may be tempted to experiment with genetic modification (p 63). And in the *Student BMJ* Richard Brixey and David Gould explain the evidence and say that, while gene doping is unlikely at Beijing 2008, it could be a problem in London 2012 (July 2008, p 235).

No Olympic dreams for Ruth Booker: just to climb again her beloved mountains (p 106) and enjoy the wonder of nature, the exhilaration of achievement, and the beauty of sport.

**Domhnall MacAuley, primary care editor, *BMJ*, [dmacauley@bmj.com](mailto:dmacauley@bmj.com)**

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[internationalforum.bmj.com](http://internationalforum.bmj.com)

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[masterclasses.bmj.com/GPs/general-update](http://masterclasses.bmj.com/GPs/general-update)

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## PLUS

Career Focus, jobs, and courses appear after p 118.