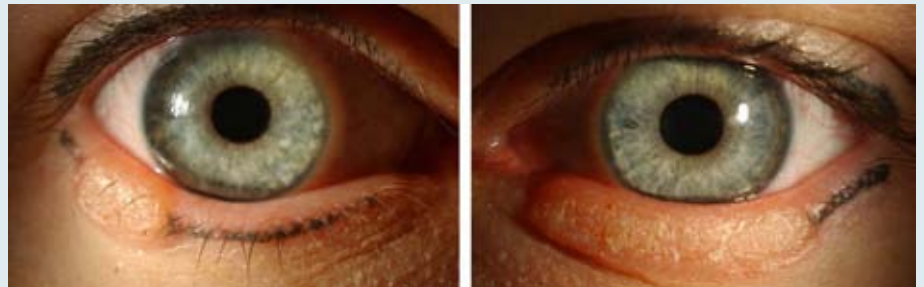


What makes a good psychiatrist? According to a survey, patients' top four criteria are being a good listener, being approachable, treating patients as equals, and being non-judgmental. Psychiatrists, on the other hand, voted for clinical knowledge, clear communication, being interested in people, and being honest and trustworthy. The researchers surmise that patients simply assume that good clinical knowledge is there (*The Psychiatrist* 2011;35:75, doi:10.1192/pb.35.2.75a).

A review of 20 years' data on gender discrimination found that although there are occasional instances of discrimination, the current under-representation of women in science is related more to gender linked personal choices: deferring careers to raise children, following a partner, or caring for parents. The authors say that money would be better spent on education and policy changes that would make institutions more responsive to the differing biological realities that deter women from choosing science in the first place (*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 2011, doi:10.1073/pnas.1014871108).

Does the success of eardrum repair surgery depend on what caused the perforation in the first place? No, say surgeons who reviewed almost 250 patients who underwent primary myringoplasty over 10 years. The best result was seen with the more accessible retro-auricular approach (97% graft take rate) compared to 77% with either an end-aural approach or via an ear speculum, but there was no difference between healing rates and perforation cause (*Journal of Laryngology and Otology* 2011;125:126-32, doi:10.1017/S0022215110002069).

Another surgical issue: do bilateral inguinal hernia repairs using mesh prostheses increase the risk of male infertility? Animal studies suggest that mesh repairs raise the risk of obstructive azospermia secondary to vasal fibrosis, but an analysis of data from the Swedish Hernia Register looking specifically at questions of childlessness found no such relation. Nor did they find any significant differences between men who'd undergone hernia repairs without mesh (*Surgery* 2011;149:179-91, doi:10.1016/j.surg.2010.04.027).



A 31 year old woman presented with localised swelling along both lower eyelids, involving the margins. She had undergone cosmetic tattooing of black eyeliner on all four lids two years earlier. The lesions appeared as raised, irregular, and solid swellings with loss of lashes. After a biopsy and microbiological investigation, an adverse reaction to cosmetic tattooing was established. Such reactions are rare. Treatment is often empirical and includes topical and systemic steroids, cryotherapy, and sometimes surgical excision. Our patient responded well to local excision of the affected areas, although she lost her lashes permanently.

Chittajallu Niveditha, trust fellow, Wolverhampton and Midland Counties Eye Infirmary, Wolverhampton WV10 0QP, UK, **Hardeep S Mudhar**, consultant, ophthalmic histopathologist, Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield, UK, **Soupramanien Sandramouli**, consultant, Wolverhampton and Midland Counties Eye Infirmary, Wolverhampton WV10 0QP, UK

Patient consent obtained.

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Survey data from Switzerland show a U-shaped relation between mental health and internet use in teenagers—an increased risk was seen both in teenagers who were heavy users of the internet (for more than two hours a day) and in those who didn't use the internet at all. High intensity users were also at risk of poor physical health. The authors advise that health professionals should be alert to such habits, but should see regular internet use as a normal behaviour without significant health risks (*Pediatrics* 2011;127:e330-5, doi:10.1542/peds.2010-1235).

An elderly woman dislocated her prosthetic hip joint but after the dislocation was reduced she was left with searing pain in her left buttock radiating to her left foot. Sciatic nerve neuropraxia was diagnosed, but the pain persisted. An ultrasound scan identified a collection within the hamstring compartment and her doctors assumed the sciatic nerve was being compressed by a haematoma. Eventually surgeons went in, re-dislocated the joint, and discovered the sciatic nerve wrapped around the neck of the femoral component (*Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* 2011;93-B:274-6, doi:10.1010.1302/0301-620X.93B2.25770).

Abnormal vital signs and the Vital Sign Score (generated by the occurrence of seven vital sign

abnormalities) collected in the first minutes after admission to an emergency department help identify those at risk of death, and is a more realistic way to gather rapid information than making individual assessments of the severity of each person's illness. The physiological parameters include threat to airway, abnormal respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, systolic blood pressure, heart rate, low Glasgow coma score, and seizures. As single measures, all factors except seizures and abnormal respiratory rate were independent predictors of hospital death (*Critical Care* 2011;15:R25, doi:10.1186/cc9972).

When otherwise healthy people get community acquired infections such as pneumonia, they often take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as a first line treatment to bring their temperature down. But for patients subsequently admitted to intensive care units, this may introduce an extra layer of complexity, because NSAIDs may affect the host response to the acute infection. One study found that NSAID exposure in the early stages of community acquired pneumonia was associated with a more complicated course with a blunted systemic response—possibly resulting in a delayed diagnosis and a protracted course (*Chest* 2011;139:387-94, doi:10.1378/chest.09-3102).

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