

## CASE REPORT

### A man with poorly controlled asthma and exercise induced symptoms

A 38 year old office worker who had recently taken up jogging as part of a fitness campaign presented to you because his efforts had not proved as successful as he had hoped. He reported a history of asthma since childhood and still had occasional symptoms throughout the year, although normally he was troubled by his wheezing only for a few weeks after viral upper respiratory tract infections. He was being prescribed beclometasone 100 µg regularly twice a day and salbutamol as needed to relieve symptoms. It had been two years since he last had a course of steroids to treat an acute exacerbation.

He had set himself the long term goal of running for an hour after work every day, but had had to curtail his phased exercise programme because of shortness of breath. Using his salbutamol inhaler before running had some effect but was not preventing the problem.

- 1 How would you approach the problem?
- 2 What treatment choices would you offer the patient?
- 3 How would you help him self manage his condition?

Submitted by Hilary Pinnock  
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## PRIZE QUIZ

### Depression

Each week we offer a prize of a *BMJ* memory stick to the person who answers correctly, in the quickest time, a set of exam questions taken from OnExamination.

To enter the quiz, go to  
[www.onexamination.com/endgames](http://www.onexamination.com/endgames).

The competition closes at midnight on Wednesday, and the winner will be announced in the print *BMJ*.

Here's one question from this week's quiz on depression from the MRCPsych examination.

**Describe this statement—true, false, don't know.**

**An asthmatic patient becomes depressed. She is taking aminophylline and theophylline preparations.**

**These are a likely cause of her depression.**

Once the competition closes answers to this question can be viewed at  
[www.onexamination.com/Endgames/LastEndgame.aspx](http://www.onexamination.com/Endgames/LastEndgame.aspx).

## STATISTICAL QUESTION

### Study design

A group of investigators decided to test the hypothesis that using postmenopausal hormones increases the risk of breast cancer. They identified 500 women with newly diagnosed breast cancer, and 500 women of the same age, from the same neighbourhoods as the first group of women, who did not have breast cancer. Then they asked all women about their past use of postmenopausal hormones.

What answer best describes the study design used here?

- a) A retrospective cohort study
- b) An incidence study
- c) A case crossover study
- d) A case-control study

Submitted by John Fletcher  
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## PICTURE QUIZ

The placenta after delivery

### Acute intrapartum obstetric emergency

A 30 year old primigravida was admitted in spontaneous labour at term. Vaginal bleeding was seen after spontaneous rupture of the membranes, and shortly afterwards a profound fetal bradycardia was recorded on cardiotocography. A "crash" emergency caesarean section was performed with delivery of a live male infant in good condition, weighing 3620 g. Apgar scores were 9 at one minute and 10 at five minutes with normal paired cord blood samples.

1. What is the diagnosis?
2. What is the ideal emergency management?
3. What risk factors are associated with this condition?

Submitted by Sharon R Sheehan, Helen M McMillan, Deirdre J Murphy Cite this as: *BMJ* 2008;337:a1940