



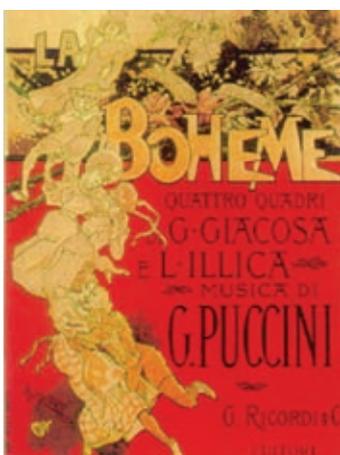
Depressive symptoms in early pregnancy and preterm delivery, p 1019



Fertility bill moves to Lords, p 1014



Obituary: a pioneer of neurosurgery in children, p 1056



An operatic medical classic, p 1059

EDITORIALS

- 1005 Aspirin for prevention of cardiovascular events**
Is only effective in established cardiovascular disease, says William R Hiatt
» [Research, p 1030](#)
- 1006 Patellofemoral pain syndrome**
Usually resolves over time, and intervention offers only limited benefit, say C Niek van Dijk and Willem M van der Tempel
» [Research, p 1034](#)
- 1007 Tight control of blood glucose and cardiovascular disease**
A strong effect that develops slowly but persists for years, says Philip Home
- 1009 The *Global Health Watch 2* report**
Holding the social and economic causes of health inequities to account, says Ronald Labonté
- 1010 Abdominal aortic aneurysm in postmenopausal women**
Smoking remains the main culprit, say Janet T Powell and Paul E Norman
» [Research, p 1037](#)

LETTERS

- 1011 NICE guidance on ADHD**
- 1012 Patterns of skeletal fractures in child abuse; Automated external defibrillators**

NEWS

- 1013 GlaxoSmithKline to limit the payments that it makes to US doctors to \$150 000 each a year**
Heart and lung disease take an increasing toll in developing world
- 1014 Changes to abortion law fail as fertility bill moves to Lords**
Patients should be able to use email for results and online consultations
- 1015 GMC says charges against fertility doctor were not misconduct**
- 1016 Patients from Afghanistan are forced to seek medical treatment in Pakistan's hospitals**
Doctors in Europe and US think conditions are deteriorating
Israeli doctors call for HIV screening for all high risk pregnant women
- 1017 European drugs agency withdraws antiobesity drug**
- 1018 Germany says two doctors needed to approve some drugs**
Records of presidential candidates show McCain has had melanoma and Obama uses nicotine therapy
- 1019 Women with severe depressive symptoms are twice as likely to have a preterm delivery**

SHORT CUTS

- 1020 What's new in the other general journals**

FEATURES

- 1022 The credit crisis and health care**
With the current financial turmoil affecting the cash flow of governments, business, and individuals, John Appleby assesses the likely effect on the NHS

OBSERVATIONS

ONLY CONNECT

- 1025 Does this work for you?**
Nicholas A Christakis

HEAD TO HEAD

- 1026 Should influenza immunisation be mandatory for healthcare workers?**
Charles Helms and Philip Polgreen believe that mandatory immunisation is necessary to achieve good uptake, but David Isaacs and Julie Leask argue that it infringes autonomy and could backfire

ANALYSIS

- 1028 Why combating tobacco smuggling is a priority**
Robert West and colleagues argue that reducing the amount of tobacco smuggled into the UK might prevent substantial numbers of premature deaths

RESEARCH, CLINICAL REVIEW, AND PRACTICE

See next page

OBITUARIES

- 1056 Kenneth Till; David Drummond Hart; Joan Davies; Kenneth Mills Tomlinson; Harold Francis Hope-Stone; John Warburton Lewis; Heather Sims Williams; Philip Warner Robertson**

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

PERSONAL VIEW

- 1058 The person in the patient** Alastair M Santhouse

COLUMNIST

- 1059 Counting our blessings** Theodore Dalrymple

MEDICAL CLASSICS

- 1059 La Bohème** Trisha Greenhalgh

COLUMNISTS

- 1060 You can call me Des** Des Spence
Model behaviour Ike Iheanacho

ENDGAMES

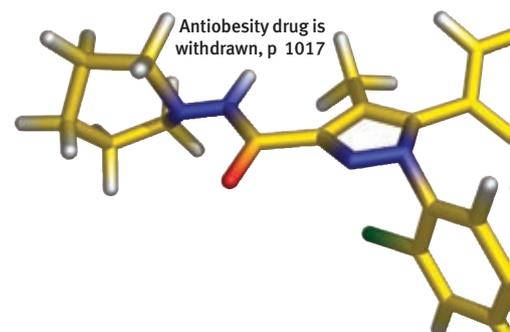
- 1061 Picture quiz; Prize quiz; Statistical question; Case report**

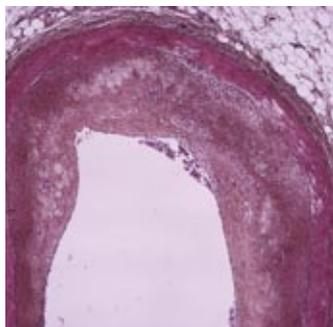
MINERVA

- 1062 Potters for Peace, and other stories**

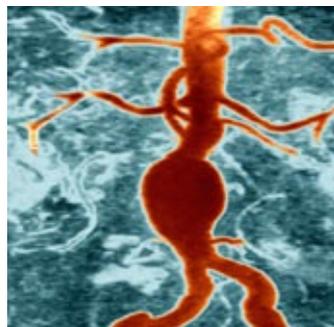
FILLERS

- 1055 Paper hazards**





The prevention of progression of arterial disease and diabetes, p 1030



Abdominal aortic aneurysm events in the women's health initiative, p 1037



Preservation of fertility in adults and children diagnosed with cancer, p 1045



Prevention and treatment of surgical site infection, pp 1049, 1051

RESEARCH

1030 The prevention of progression of arterial disease and diabetes (POPADAD) trial: factorial randomised placebo controlled trial of aspirin and antioxidants in patients with diabetes and asymptomatic peripheral arterial disease

Evidence on secondary prevention of cardiovascular events in diabetic patients has suggested effectiveness in primary prevention, but this trial found no evidence to support such use of either aspirin or antioxidants

Jill Belch, Angus MacCuish, Iain Campbell, Stuart Cobbe, Roy Taylor, Robin Prescott, Robert Lee, Jean Bancroft, Shirley MacEwan, James Shepherd, Peter Macfarlane, Andrew Morris, Roland Jung, Christopher Kelly, Alan Connacher, Norman Peden, Andrew Jamieson, David Mathews, Graeme Leese, John McKnight, Iain O'Brien, Colin Semple, John Petrie, Derek Gordon, Stuart Pringle, Ron MacWalter, the Prevention of Progression Of Arterial Disease and Diabetes Study Group, Diabetes Registry Group, and Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh

» Editorial p 1005

1034 Foot orthoses and physiotherapy in the treatment of patellofemoral pain syndrome: randomised clinical trial

Foot orthoses (ready made shaped shoe inserts) were better than flat inserts and were about as effective as physiotherapy

Natalie Collins, Kay Crossley, Elaine Beller, Ross Darnell, Thomas McPoil, Bill Vicenzino

» Editorial p 1006

1037 Abdominal aortic aneurysm events in the women's health initiative: cohort study

Aortic rupture and repair were both strongly associated with ever smoking, current smoking, and amount smoked, while diabetes (as in men) and postmenopausal hormone therapy were both negatively associated with these events in women

Frank A Lederle, Joseph C Larson, Karen L Margolis, Matthew A Allison, Matthew S Freiberg, Barbara B Cochrane, William F Graettinger, J David Curb

» Editorial p 1010

1040 Introduction of shared electronic records: multi-site case study using diffusion of innovation theory

Such records are complex innovations that must be acceptable to patients and staff and will fit into organisational routines: whether this succeeds depends on complex factors

Trisha Greenhalgh, Katja Stramer, Tanja Bratan, Emma Byrne, Yara Mohammad, Jill Russell

CLINICAL REVIEW

1045 Preservation of fertility in adults and children diagnosed with cancer

Roger Hart

PRACTICE

1049 GUIDELINES: Prevention and treatment of surgical site infection: summary of NICE guidance

This is 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

David Leaper, Shona Burman-Roy, Ana Palanca, Katherine Cullen, Danielle Worster, Eva Gautam-Aitken, Martin Whittle, on behalf of the Guideline Development Group

1051 Commentary: Controversies in NICE guidance on surgical site infection

Zygmunt H Krukowski, Julie Bruce

1052 Lesson of the week: Giant cell arteritis causing aortic dissection and acute hypertension

Recent onset hypertension should prompt investigation for secondary causes

Yvo M Smulders, Dominique W M Verhagen

1054 10-Minute consultation: New patient asking for a benzodiazepine prescription

This is part of a series of occasional articles on common problems in primary care

Simon de Lusignan, Nicola Buxton, Andy Kent

RESEARCH PUBLISHED ONLINE

Prescribing "placebo treatments": results of national survey of US internists and rheumatologists

BMJ, doi:10.1136/bmj.a1938

Jon C Tilburt, Ezekiel J Emanuel, Ted J Kaptchuk, Farr A Curlin, Franklin G Miller

The joint impact on being overweight of self reported behaviours of eating quickly and eating until full : cross sectional survey

BMJ, doi:10.1136/bmj.a2002

Koutatsu Maruyama, Shinichi Sato, Tetsuya Ohira, Kenji Maeda, Hiroyuki Noda, Yoshimi Kubota, Setsuko Nishimura, Akihiko Kitamura, Masahiko Kiyama, Takeo Okada, Hironori Imano, Masakazu Nakamura, Yoshinori Ishikawa, Michinori Kurokawa, Satoshi Sasaki, Hiroyasu Ito

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SHELLA BURNETT

PICTURE OF THE WEEK
Ether Frolics, performed by Sound and Fury with artists from the Shunt Collective, is part of the Performing Medicine season (www.performingmedicine.com), which runs from 30 October to 11 December. This show explores the experience of anaesthesia and takes place on 3 November at the Royal London Hospital

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

29th Rank in the world in 2004 for the US infant mortality rate—worse than Cuba and Hungary (**News**, p 1014)

£6m Amount invested by Naomi House children's hospice, Winchester, in the troubled Icelandic bank Kaupthing Singer and Friedlander (**Feature**, p 1022)

4.19 Odds ratio for having an abdominal aortic aneurysm in women who currently smoke compared with women who smoked in the past (**Research**, p 1037)

14% Proportion of all healthcare acquired infections that arise at surgical sites (**Practice**, p 1049)

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

“Many of us now use the internet to bank, shop, and book holidays. But somehow the NHS has not embraced this technology” (**News**, p 1014)

“Aspirin was not effective in the primary prevention of cardiovascular events in patients with asymptomatic peripheral arterial disease and diabetes” (**Research**, p 1030)

“In patients with cancer, sperm count is lowest in the six months after treatment” (**Clinical Review**, p 1045)

“What has become of psychiatry? Tick boxes and risk management protocols dominate the agenda” (**Personal View**, p 1058)

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Alternative reports

Nicholas Christakis thinks that pharmaceutical drugs are terrific—yet they work only some of the time. Alastair Santhouse thinks that psychiatry is the noblest branch of medicine—yet it is characterised by dullness of thought and practice. Ike Iheanacho thinks predictive models have provided countless advances in the understanding of disease and treatment—yet they are too easily believed.

All three offer alternative ways of looking at familiar things. Christakis's point is that doctors and patients have different understandings of what it means to say that a drug “works” (p 1025). Against the patient's standard most drugs don't work. “For example, sildenafil works less than half the time...only 48% of men are found to respond to the drug compared with 11% who respond to a placebo.” If a toaster didn't toast bread every time, most people would take it back to the shop. He argues that doctors should routinely evaluate patients' responses to a drug.

Alastair Santhouse worries that psychiatry isn't helping people with the “vast bulk of mental illness largely ignored by psychiatry”—depression, anxiety, conversion disorders, and somatiform disorders (p 1058). He thinks that reductionist thinking is reducing individuals to a function of their genes. His prescription: to start again to understand the lives and motivations of individual patients.

Ike Iheanacho attributes the credit crisis to risk models—or rather to our forgetting that models are merely frameworks for testing speculative ideas (p 1060). In the financial world, models got to drive the real world too much; he worries that

the same may happen in medicine. John Appleby meanwhile writes about the likely real effects of the credit crisis on health. He paints a gloomy long term picture: a spiral of recession leading to higher unemployment, less tax revenue, less money for public services, yet increasing demand for those services (p 1022).

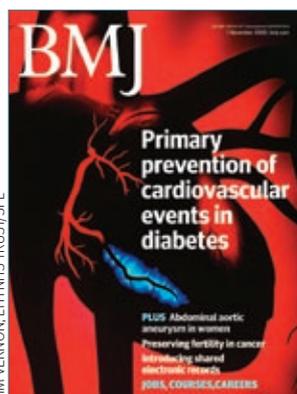
The authors of *Global Health Watch 2* would probably use the credit crisis as an example of the failure of globalisation—one of the determinants of health discussed in their “alternative world health report” on health inequities. As outlined by Ronald Labonté in his editorial (p 1010), some of the analysis is familiar. The report argues for access to health care according to need and for support from pooled funding, and it criticises the World Bank for promoting entrepreneurial medicine in the poorest countries. Yet this report, unlike most mainstream ones, also discusses the role of violent change and the politics of resistance: “Oppressed groups are not passive. They do resist, and in that resistance lies hope.”

From Labonté to *La Bohème* is a short intellectual step. In her account of Puccini's opera about poverty and tuberculosis (p 1059), Trisha Greenhalgh argues that although the diseases associated with poverty may change over time, the underlying causes remain the same: “Social exclusion, insecurity, lack of access to basic health care, and the sociocultural preconditions for casual and transactional sex.”

Jane Smith, deputy editor, [BMJ](mailto:jsmith@bmj.com)

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TIM VERNON, LITHNHS TRUST/SPL

Myocardial infarction often results from a blockage in a coronary artery (blue)

Editorial, p 1005
Research, p 1030

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clinicalevidence.bmj.com



PLUS

Career Focus, jobs, and courses appear after p 1060.



WHAT'S NEW ON BMJ.COM

THE GLOBAL CREDIT CRISIS

The "credit crunch" continues to make headlines everywhere. In this issue, King's Fund chief economist John Appleby examines the effects this crisis will have on the NHS (p 1022). Three bloggers on bmj.com give us their take on the situation. Cam Donaldson is about to attend the 7th meeting of the International Society on Priorities in Health Care at the Sage Gateshead, where 300 delegates—managers and clinicians as well as economists and ethicists—from around the world will gather to discuss issues of how best to manage scarce resources in health care. Vidhya Alakeson, a policy adviser to the US government, reflects on the credit crunch and US health insurance; and UK junior doctor Helen Barratt muses on living healthily in cash starved times.

LATEST RESEARCH

Pay for performance has improved blood pressure monitoring and reduced health inequalities

Pay for performance has substantially improved blood pressure monitoring and control in England, and the difference in monitoring levels between the most and least deprived areas has all but disappeared, according to this survey of data from the quality and outcomes framework. This study adds to the evidence that the Quality of Outcomes Framework (QOF) has improved quality of care and reduced health inequalities and is a "truly equitable public health intervention," says the accompanying editorial.

Prescribing "placebo treatments"

Half of the US internal medicine and rheumatology doctors in this national survey reported often recommending placebo treatments, most commonly vitamins, over the counter analgesics, and antibiotics. Most viewed this practice as ethically permissible. They might not be fully transparent with their patients about their motivations, but they largely avoid prescribing sugar pills and saline.

LATEST BLOGS

Harvey Marcovitch has had to confront a parent's worst fear, in attending the funeral of his son Jim (pictured), who died from lymphoma. He celebrates Jim's musicianship and lust for life: "Jim approached his death with the same single minded drive that he had lived his life. His last months, once he learnt his bone marrow transplant had failed, were a fever of creativity, with CD launches, concerts, and even the production of the illustration for the cover of a friend's book . . . He died, as he lived, with magic and grace. I have never properly understood the compulsion many people have to visit graves but we will go back to his clearing in the spring to see the new life that has sprung up around him from the hundreds of bulbs we planted last weekend."

Join these debates and others at <http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/>



Last week's poll asked

"Should developed countries become net exporters of health professionals?"

You replied:

YES 217 votes (59%)

NO 150 votes (41%)

This week's poll asks

"Which presidential candidate has better plans for US health reform?"



MOST READ

The prevention of progression of arterial disease and diabetes (POPADAD) trial

The joint impact on being overweight of self reported behaviours of eating quickly and eating until full

Evidence based medicine: what it is and what it isn't
Effectiveness of continuous glucose monitoring in pregnant women with diabetes

Aspirin for prevention of cardiovascular events

PODCAST

Rebecca Coombes talks to Phil Hammond about HPV vaccination and being a media doc. <http://podcasts.bmj.com/bmj>

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