

Barium swallow
Try the Anatomy quiz
in **ENDGAMES**, p 737

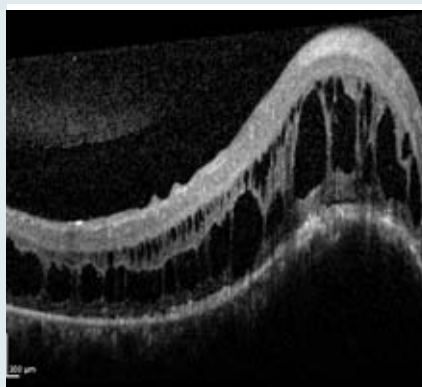
Computers do it better than humans when it comes to taking a sexual history (*Sexually Transmitted Infections* 2010;86:310-4, doi:10.1136/sti.2010.043422). Interviews assisted by computer were compared with interviews conducted with paper and pen. The computers recorded more risky behaviour and generated more tests than traditional paper and pen interviews, although increased disclosure did not increase the number of diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections and computer assisted self interviews resulted in fewer HIV tests.

Habitual moderate and vigorous physical activity can attenuate arterial stiffening, but does it make a difference if you're fit or unfit to start with, and what about light physical activity? Around 540 men and woman participated in this study, in which arterial stiffness was measured by carotid-femoral pulse wave velocity. Age related arterial stiffness was inversely related to daily time spent in doing light physical activity more obviously in older unfit people, but not so evident in those who were older but already fit (*Hypertension* 2010;56:540-6, doi:10.1161/hypertensionaha.110.156331).

Who benefits most from therapeutic hypothermia after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest? In a retrospective study of 400 comatose survivors of witnessed cardiac arrest, the rate of favourable neurological outcome at the time of discharge was higher among patients who received therapeutic hypothermia than in those who did not, especially for those in whom the interval between collapse and return of spontaneous circulation was longer than 15 minutes (*Critical Care* 2010;14:R155, doi:10.1186/cc9225).

The sharing of medical records with patients is offered in many places. In Bangladesh, a survey found that men were more interested than women in sharing their records, and they were more likely to anticipate the benefits, as well as the problems, of such a scheme (*Bangladesh Medical Journal* 2010;39:3-6). The benefits of sharing expected by patients included improving patients' adherence to their doctor's recommendations (90%), improving their understanding of their own medical condition (88%), increasing trust in their doctors (95%), and reassurance (85%).

A "verbal autopsy" technique was adopted to determine mortality patterns in an urban slum in India. The population in Kolkata was followed up for 18 months, during which time there were 544 deaths, with an overall mortality rate of 6.2 per



A 31 year old man visited the ophthalmology service after watching a three dimensional (3D) film at which he had been unable to appreciate the 3D effects. He was diagnosed with a choroidal haemangioma in his right eye that had caused a retinal detachment. These tumours are the most common vascular tumour of the choroid. After treatment he was left with a macular scar. His visual acuity improved from only being able to see hand movements in the right eye to 6/60. Both eyes are needed to perceive three dimensions. A large decrease in visual acuity in one eye may go unnoticed for some time but would become apparent when depth perception is needed.

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Patient consent obtained.

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1000 person years. A cause was ascribed to 89% of deaths. In adults, the leading causes of death in descending order were cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory complaints, and digestive disorders. In children under five years, death was mainly ascribed to tuberculosis, respiratory infections, and diarrhoeal diseases (*Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 2010;88:667-74, doi:10.2471/BLT.09.073742).

A systematic review of early psychosocial factors on the future risk of type 2 diabetes, metabolic disturbances, and obesity included 10 studies and more than 200 000 individuals. Overall, there was good evidence that childhood socioeconomic status is associated with type 2 diabetes and obesity in later life. The database on the role of other psychosocial factors in childhood (such as trauma or neglect) was too small to draw firm conclusions (*BMC Public Health* 2010;10:525, doi:10.1186/1471-2458-10-525).

Early weaning from the incubator for preterm infants is safe at weights as low as 1600 g and reduces the length of stay in hospital, according to an Italian team. This randomised study compared infants moved to open cribs once they weighed 1600 g with those transferred at the standard weight of over 1800 g. No child needed to be returned to an incubator, and just one baby—from the standard group—had to be readmitted to hospital in the first week after discharge. Growth and breast feeding were similar between the groups (*Pediatrics* 2010;126:e651-6, doi:10.1542/peds.2009-3500).

The value of an object may be enhanced simply by staring at it longer (*Nature Neuroscience* 2010; published online 12 September, doi:10.1038/nn.2635). Given a choice of options, it turns out that we prefer the one we spend longer looking at. Hungry participants in this experiment were asked to choose between pairs of appetising snacks that the participant had previously claimed to like equally. They were allowed to view both snacks until they selected the preferred one—the final choice was viewed for half a second longer about 70% of the time.

Adults with a parental history of depression and anxiety disorder have higher levels of cortisol on awakening than those without such a parental history, reports a Dutch study. The elevated response resembles that of people who have depression and anxiety themselves, suggesting that a higher cortisol awakening curve reflects not a state factor but a trait marker—an underlying biological vulnerability for the development of depression and anxiety (*British Journal of Psychiatry* 2010;197:180-5, doi:10.1192/bjp.bp.109.076869).

Important pitfalls exist in how people think and make decisions, and neurologists are no more free of these than anyone else, according to an article in *Annals of Neurology* (2010;67:425-33 doi:10.1002/ana.21907). Common traps include being unduly swayed by early cues in how cases are presented, inability to switch gear after making an initial diagnosis, overvaluing recent or memorable personal experiences in estimating disease probabilities, leaning too heavily towards diagnoses that seem to match a pattern, and over-reliance on a respected clinician's interpretation. The author calls for greater self awareness to reduce the risk of diagnostic error.

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