



**Sagittal computed tomography image through the face**  
**Try the anatomy quiz in ENDGAMES, p 1277**

Men's memories about their mothers' affection during childhood may be reinforced by giving them oxytocin. Adult men completed questionnaires about childhood maternal care and these recollections were monitored over time as they were given doses of oxytocin or placebo. For those whose memories invoked anxiety, oxytocin seemed to amplify their pre-existing perceptions, whereas those with fond memories grew fonder with oxytocin. The researchers don't know if the drug increases the ability to recall maternal care or whether it triggers a biased search for memories that support pre-existing beliefs (*Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* 2010, doi:10.1073/pnas.1012669107).

Oxytocin is also given intravenously to women undergoing caesarean delivery to prevent postpartum bleeds caused by uterine atony. Researchers conducted a prospective, randomised, double blind controlled trial of adding a bolus of oxytocin to the standard infusion, in 143 women undergoing caesareans with at least one risk factor for uterine atony (*Anesthesia and Analgesia* 2010;111:1460-6, doi:10.1213/ANE.0b013e3181f8930a). They conclude that the addition of the bolus did not affect the need for additional uterotonic drugs to prevent or treat postpartum bleeds in the first 24 hours, although the combination caused stronger initial uterine contractions. Infusions alone may suffice.

The belief that patients with coronary stents who are taking clopidogrel cannot undergo surgery without bleeding is knocked on the head in the *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery* (2010;140:970-6, doi:10.1016/j.jtcvs.2010.07.051). A prospective study of patients undergoing thoracic surgery under general anaesthesia found that patients with stents who were not taking clopidogrel were at greater risk of perioperative myocardial infarction than those taking clopidogrel. Apart from this, morbidity, mortality, and length of admission did not differ between the two groups. However, patients taking clopidogrel who need a repeat thoracotomy may be at a greater risk of bleeding.

"What would you do if you were me, doctor?" A study of psychiatrists' personal and professional perspectives on treatment recommendations found that when asked by patients what they would do, the doctors maintained



A hairdresser presented with an interdigital pilonidal sinus on her foot. She often wore open toed shoes, exposing the interdigital area to freshly cut hair that is able to penetrate the skin and start the disease process. Blonde, red, brown, and grey hairs from different customers were seen protruding from the sinus. Interdigital pilonidal sinus is an occupational disease that usually affects hairdressers' hands; few cases have been described affecting the feet. The condition may be prevented by avoiding exposure of the interdigital skin to freshly cut hair. Treatment is by surgical excision.

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 Patient consent obtained.

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their professional roles. They suggested antidepressants rather than watchful waiting for depression, and depot rather than oral medication for schizophrenia. But when asked to decide what they would choose for themselves if they were ill, psychiatrists said they personally favoured watchful waiting and oral medication (*British Journal of Psychiatry* 2010;197:441-7, doi:10.1192/bjp.bp.110.078006).

Femoral neck fractures are the most common complication after hip resurfacing surgery and poor bone quality is a major risk factor. A study of 423 patients undergoing hip resurfacing without a history of osteoporosis showed that over the next two years there was no significant deterioration in femoral neck bone density between operated and non-operated hips, despite a substantial increase in the level of physical activity. The increased risk of fracture presumably arises from a change in load patterns, which in turn leads to local remodelling (*Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery (British Edition)* 2010;92-B:1648-53, doi:10.1302/0301-620x.92B12.22141).

Cryoablation is an accepted alternative technique to radiofrequency ablation for treating atrioventricular nodal re-entry

tachycardia, but is it as effective in the longer term? A large multicentre trial found the two were equally effective in the short term, but cryoablation was associated with a higher recurrence rate at six months. Cryoablation was perceived as safer and less painful than radiofrequency ablation, but it took longer and there were more problems with the devices used (*Circulation* 2010;122:2239-45, doi:10.1161/circulationaha.110.970350).

Patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease can be difficult to wean off mechanical ventilation and acute cardiac dysfunction seems to be the main problem in this group. An intervention designed to target the cardiovascular system in difficult to wean patients involved a continuous intravenous infusion of nitroglycerin, started at the beginning of the spontaneous breathing trial and titrated to maintain normal systolic blood pressure. For the 12 patients who took part, weaning failed on the control day, but with nitroglycerin successful spontaneous breathing trials were achieved in 11 patients and successful extubation was achieved in eight (*Critical Care* 2010;14:R204, doi:10.1186/cc9326).

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