



A blistering eruption after a holiday in India
Try the picture quiz in ENDGAMES, p 48

Diet is linked to mortality in the over 65s. A 14 year follow-up study of almost 1000 adults aged 65 or over who participated in the British Diet and Nutrition Survey in 1994/95 concludes that the recommended food score and the Mediterranean diet score are both inversely associated with all cause mortality (*Journal of Nutrition* 2012;142:320-5, doi:10.3945/jn.111.148692). The authors say that simple food based indicators predict mortality just as well as more complex diet scores.

A US randomised controlled trial of strict versus liberal target ranges for perioperative glucose levels in patients undergoing coronary artery bypass grafting found both target ranges led to similar levels of perioperative complications. But the maintenance of blood glucose levels within a liberal range after bypass grafting was associated with fewer hypoglycaemic events (*Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery* 2012;143:318-25, doi:10.1016/j.jtcvs.2011.10.070). The recommended blood glucose range is 7-10 mmol/L.

Knee replacement rates are rising in the US, but the upward trajectory isn't explained by the increase in population or obesity (*Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* 2012;94:201-7, doi:10.2106/jbjs.j.01958). The US saw a 134% rise in total knee replacements performed between 1999 and 2008, when the overall population size increased by just 11%. While the number of 45 to 64 year olds rose by 29%, the rate of total knee replacements tripled for this group. The number of obese and non-obese people rose by 23% and 4% respectively overall. More knee injuries and an expanding list of indications for knee replacement may explain the rise in rates.

A randomised controlled trial of montelukast to prevent upper respiratory tract infections in pre-school children (aged 1-5 years) failed to show any benefit (*Pediatrics* 2012;129:e285-90, doi:10.1542/peds.2011-0358). The trial ran for 12 weeks and involved 300 children randomised to daily montelukast or placebo. The proportion of weeks in which an upper respiratory infection was reported was 30.4% in the active group and 30.7% in the placebo group.



A 78 year old man presented with a two month history of a lesion on his penis. The lesion bled recurrently and profusely. His history included colorectal cancer treated with radiotherapy, combined chemotherapy, and anteroposterior resection five years earlier. Clinical examination showed a 6 mm by 7 mm fleshy, red papule on the glans penis. Skin biopsy confirmed metastatic adenocarcinoma from his colorectal primary cancer. About 9% of patients with internal malignancies present with skin metastases. The commonest cancers metastasising to skin in men are lung, colon, malignant melanoma, oral squamous cell, and kidney. Cutaneous metastases usually appear in skin near the primary tumour.

M Arias, senior house officer (mcam@doctors.org.uk),
E Ladoyanni, consultant dermatologist, Department of Dermatology, Dudley Group of Hospitals, Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley, UK
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Being pessimistic may be a risk factor for failure of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment. Among 198 women aged 24-45 years undergoing IVF treatment, optimism and pessimism were measured individually and also as a single bipolar dimension, at the start of treatment. Pessimism, measured as a separate dimension, predicted IVF failure independent of known risk factors for poor IVF treatment response. The mechanism is not understood (*Psychosomatic Medicine* 2012;74:193-9, doi:10.1097/PSY.0b013e318242096b).

Little is known about the longer term outcomes of anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction using the patient's own patellar tendon. Some suggest the procedure leads to degenerative joint disease. A 13 year follow-up of 114 patients reports that overall the procedure produced good outcomes. But the amount of cartilage and meniscal damage at the time of surgery was associated with a poor radiological outcome at 13 years. The injuries sustained at the time of the anterior cruciate ligament rupture, rather than the reconstruction itself, might be predictive of eventual degenerative bone disease (*American Journal of Sports Medicine* 2012;40:404-13, doi:10.1177/0363546511428580).

Doctors are much less likely to cite smoking as a cause of death on death certificates than they are to cite alcohol, even when the causal link

with smoking is strong. Post-mortem reports also fail to mention smoking as a contributory factor (*Journal of Clinical Pathology* 2012;65:129-32, doi:10.1136/jclinpath-2011-200299). A common excuse given by doctors is they do not wish to stigmatise the dead, although why the same logic is not applied to alcohol is unclear.

Bioprosthetic heart valves degenerate more quickly in recipients with type 2 diabetes (*Circulation* 2012;125:604-14, doi:10.1161/circulationaha.111.025064). Analysts of a large multicentre Italian study of recipients of bioprosthetic implants compared those who had diabetes (28%) with those who did not. Freedom from valve deterioration at seven years was significantly lower in the diabetic group. Having diabetes remained the strongest predictor of structural valve degeneration even allowing for other known risk factors.

Semen was analysed in three groups of men—normal weight, overweight, and obese. Ejaculate volume, sperm vitality, sperm morphology, and round cell and neutrophil counts did not differ between the groups. Men with a normal body mass index had a higher proportion of sperm with progressive motility. Obese men had lower semen mitochondrial activity and more sperm with signs of genetic damage (*BJU International* 2012, doi:10.1111/j.1464-410X.2011.10813.x).

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