



A sore red eye with systemic involvement

Try the picture quiz in
ENDGAMES, p 50

Seven cohorts from Norway, Austria, and Sweden suggest that hypertension and cancer could share underlying mechanisms (*Hypertension* 2012;59:802-10, doi:10.1161/hypertensionaha.111.189258). The cohorts revealed that in men, raised blood pressure was positively associated with cancer of the throat, colon, rectum, lung, bladder, kidney, and skin. In women, raised blood pressure was positively linked with cancer of the liver, pancreas, cervix, and uterus, and malignant melanoma. Minerva wonders whether in years to come we will think of cancer and hypertension in tandem, just as we now do about diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Human skin cells (fibroblasts) taken from babies and young children have been efficiently converted to neurons by being cultured with small molecules that have a role in producing neurons in vivo and two transcription factors. Conversion to neurons was 15 times faster than the usual method, in which fibroblasts were genetically modified to express a host of necessary transcription factors. The fully functioning neurons produced by this new method will be used in cellular models of age related neurological diseases (*Nature Methods* 2012, doi:10.1038/nmeth.1972).

A large, population based, prospective study of the effect of fetal exposure to parental smoking and the risk of wheezing in 4574 young children has concluded that continued maternal smoking is associated with increased risks of wheezing in preschool children (*Chest* 2012;141:876-85, doi:10.1378/chest.11-0112). Maternal smoking during the first trimester only was not associated with childhood wheezing. Among children of non-smoking mothers, fetal exposure to paternal smoking was not consistently associated with a raised risk of wheezing.

An Italian, multicentre, randomised controlled trial of heparin in pregnant women with a history of placenta mediated complications was stopped prematurely because of the futility of the intervention becoming apparent at the first interim analysis (*Blood* 2012;119:3269-75, doi:10.1182/blood-2011-11-391383). Researchers hypothesised that heparin would prevent recurrent complications in late

An otherwise fit 30 year old was referred with several years' history of suspected viral warts on his palms and soles, which were unresponsive to conventional wart treatment. His children had no warts and he had no lesions elsewhere. Systemic treatment failed to affect the lesions. Biopsy of a palmar lesion showed punctuate keratoderma, an autosomal dominant condition characterised by small firm nodules on the palms and soles. Treatments include emollients, keratolytics, and topical and oral retinoids. This condition should be suspected if warty lesions do not resolve with wart treatment.

Jemma Collins, core medical trainee year 2 dermatology, **Susana Sidhu**, specialist registrar in dermatology, **Ruwani Katugampola**, consultant dermatologist, Department of Dermatology, University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff CF14 4XW, UK



Patient consent obtained.

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2012;344:e2693

pregnancy, but the difference in absolute event risk between the treatment and control arms was not significant. These results again challenge the routine practice of giving antithrombotic prophylaxis with low molecular weight heparin throughout pregnancy.

Being able to return to sporting activities, especially running, is important to active patients who are considering hip resurfacing arthroplasty. A French prospective study of 202 patients identified that 40 of them were runners before surgery (*American Journal of Sports Medicine* 2012;40:889, doi:10.1177/0363546511434564). At the most recent follow-up, 92% of patients had resumed running, and the average recovery time (that is, the time taken to reach a level assessed by the patient as good) was 16.4 weeks. Some patients even returned to competitive running after resurfacing.

Breast milk and oral sucrose have both been shown to have an analgesic effect in premature newborn babies undergoing minor painful procedures such as heel prick tests. Research suggests that breast milk is superior to sucrose

for babies carried to term, but is this the case for preterm babies? A randomised controlled trial assessed 71 preterm babies using pain profile scores. No significant differences in scores were seen between those given breast milk and those given sucrose (*Pediatrics* 2012;129:657, doi:10.1542/peds.2011-2173).

Some cohort studies have indicated that high density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL) is linked to longer life. The Physicians Health Study reviewed 1351 male doctors who had given blood for full lipid analysis in 1997 and who would have been 90 years old by March 2009. Those who survived to age 90 years had significantly higher levels of HDL at baseline than those who had died before the age of 90 years. After adjusting for confounding factors related to longevity such as smoking and weight management, the association between the highest HDL levels at baseline and lower risk for all cause mortality before age 90 years remained robust (*Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* 2012, doi:10.1161/circoutcomes.111.963850).

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2012;344:e2692