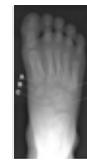


# MINERVA

Send comments or suggest ideas to Minerva: [minerva@bmj.com](mailto:minerva@bmj.com)



**Radiograph of a 3 year old child's right foot**

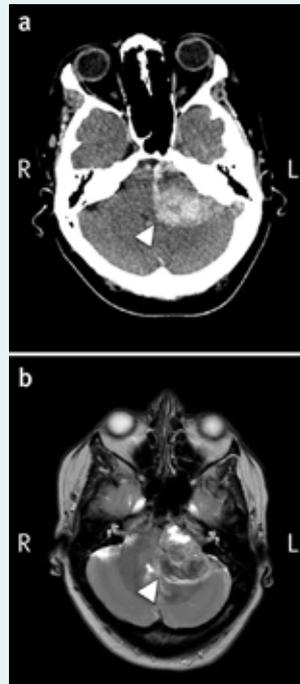
Try the anatomy quiz in ENDGAMES, p 36

After a first epileptic fit, most countries in the world impose a driving ban of several months. The overall risk of a further seizure is about 50%, but the risk declines steeply with time. The Western Australian first seizure database, established in 2000, allows an accurate stratified assessment of risk after unprovoked fits or fits provoked by brain lesions or systemic factors (*Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* 2014, doi:10.1136/jnnp-2013-307529). On the basis of an accident risk ratio of 2.5%, it seems that driving should be banned for at least eight months after an unprovoked seizure, and at least five months after a provoked seizure, which is longer than most jurisdictions currently impose.

In determining cases of suicide, coroners in the UK have to establish “beyond reasonable doubt” that the person intended to kill himself or herself. This is a legacy of the days before 1961, when suicide was a criminal act and subject to the same burden of proof as homicide. Leading suicide researchers looked at data relating to all deaths in 2005 in 12 coroner districts in England given a suicide, open, accidental, or narrative verdict where suicide was considered a possibility (*Journal of Public Health* 2014, doi:10.1093/pubmed/fdu024). They classified 593 deaths as suicide, of which 385 (65.4%) received a verdict of suicide from the coroner. They concluded that official statistics may provide a poor reflection of the actual incidence of suicide, with large regional variations.

Long distance runners rarely experience loneliness. Packed together by a common desire to enjoy extremes of exhaustion, they face more serious hazards. Over four years, the South African Two Oceans marathon attracted 39 511 starters for the 21 km course and 26 354 starters for the 56 km course (*British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2014, doi:10.1136/bjsports-2014-093470). In the first group, two died, in the second, which had more rigorous criteria of fitness, nobody died. The incidence of other medical complications was about eight in 1000. The most common were exercise associated collapse (postural hypotension), dermatological conditions, musculoskeletal injuries, and serious exercise associated muscle cramping.

SpyAd the moonlighting protein. This is the delightful name proposed by Florentine microbiologists for a multifunctional protein they



A 64 year old woman presented with acute headache, vomiting, and vertigo. Examination showed left sided facial and abducens nerve palsies, with left sided dysmetria and dysdiadochokinesis. She had a long history of left sided tinnitus and hearing loss. Computed tomography showed acute haemorrhage in the left cerebellopontine angle (A). Magnetic resonance imaging showed an extra-axial tumour containing acute blood (B). After neurosurgical resection, histological examination confirmed acoustic neuroma with acute haemorrhage. She remains tumour free one year after surgery. Intratumoral haemorrhage is a recognised complication of acoustic neuroma. We describe this phenomenon as acoustic apoplexy, reminiscent of the better known pituitary apoplexy.

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Patient consent obtained.

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have just discovered in their search for antigens to target when trying to develop a vaccine against *Streptococcus pyogenes* (*Infection and Immunity* 2014, doi:10.1128/IAI.00064-14). SpyAd stands for *Streptococcus pyogenes* adhesion and division protein. Minerva isn't sure what the moonlighting refers to, but finds the idea poetic.

Minerva was pleased to note the conclusion of a study in *Pediatrics* (2014, doi:10.1542/peds.2013-3291) showing that “Urine dipstick testing compares favorably with both microscopy and combined urinalysis in febrile infants aged 1 to 90 days. The urine dipstick test may be an adequate stand-alone screen for UTI [urinary tract infection] in febrile infants while awaiting urine culture results.” Fever in the first three months of life can be hard to diagnose, especially the 10-15% of cases that are caused by urinary tract infection. But in this US cohort of febrile infants, urine sampling by bag collection or bladder needling was excluded, so the findings apply only to samples obtained by catheterisation. Not a practice that's widespread in primary care.

Hidradenitis suppurativa is the Graeco-Roman name given to recurrent pussy armpits. Pus in the armpits is not particularly rare, but true hidradenitis suppurativa is, according to a

survey using National Center for Health Statistics databases of visits to healthcare providers in the US (*American Journal of Epidemiology* 2014, doi:10.1093/aje/kwu078). There are perhaps just 100 000 Americans with the condition, and investigators found no evidence that this is the result of underdiagnosis.

When Henry V of England set out to conquer France, he took with him 17 Banbury cheeses, because he didn't trust the local stuff. Since then, Banbury cheese has died out, but French cheeses continue to flourish magnificently, in large measure because of the culture of various *Penicillium* spp within and outside them. This is thought to have originated from chance introductions from mouldy bread left together with cheese at the right temperature. French medieval nobility would pay special pilgrimages to the cave near Roquefort where a shepherd had first accidentally allowed his ewe's milk cheese to become contaminated with *Penicillium roqueforti*. Nowadays, this takes place in factories, which inevitably become full of fungal bioaerosols. Two French investigators looked at fungal spore levels in cheese factories (*Annals of Occupational Hygiene* 2014, doi:10.1093/annhyg/meu027). They found high levels of exposure, but are not clear about the burden of harm from sensitisation.

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