



High resolution axial computed tomogram of the ear

Try the anatomy quiz in
ENDGAMES, p 35

The symptoms of pancreatic cancer are notoriously non-specific, and it is not sensible to order urgent tests for everyone with them. But those at greatest risk can be defined by using a simple score based on current cigarette smoking, current use of a proton pump inhibitor, recent diagnosis of diabetes, recent diagnosis of pancreatitis, Jewish ancestry, and ABO blood group other than O (*American Journal of Epidemiology* 2015, doi:10.1093/aje/kwv026).

There is something about autocracy that helps to make trains run on time and to eliminate malaria. Mussolini did it in Italy in the 1930s, and the government of China seems to be following suit—with lots of ultrafast trains and domestic malaria now largely confined to the western province of Yunnan (*American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 2015, doi:10.4269/ajtmh.14-0733), which borders on countries where malaria is endemic. And as Chinese influence spreads, an increasing proportion of malaria in China is imported from Africa.

It's fracking, but done through an arthroscope. Some orthopaedic surgeons have taken to treating full thickness chondral damage in the hip by creating microfractures. A study compares patient reported outcomes in patients who had the procedure with those in patients who had hip arthroscopy but no microfracturing because they were not judged to have full thickness damage (*Am J Sports Med* 2015 doi:10.1177/0363546515588174). The last group fared better, but the groups were not strictly comparable. Whether orthopaedic fracking is environmentally friendly to the hip can be decided only by a proper randomised trial.

Heart failure is the most common cause of revolving hospital door syndrome. A study from Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City shows that the syndrome can be predicted by an "orthoedema" score (*Circulation Heart Failure* 2015, doi:10.1161/CIRCHEARTFAILURE.114.001957). The score was based purely on symptoms of orthopnoea (≥ 2 pillows=2 points, < 2 pillows=0 points) and peripheral oedema (trace=0 points, moderate=1 point, severe=2 points) at baseline, discharge, and 60 day follow-up. Clinical medicine at its simplest.



A 71 year old woman with rheumatoid arthritis and a four week history of progressive painless swelling over her right acromioclavicular joint was referred by her GP and then the emergency department with a suspected abscess. On examination she was well and afebrile but had rotator cuff deficiency. Plain radiography showed rotator cuff arthropathy and glenohumeral arthritis. Acromioclavicular joint cysts are caused by degeneration of the rotator cuff, which allows synovial fluid to escape superiorly through the subacromial bursa and degenerate acromioclavicular joint capsule. If symptomatic these cysts can be resected at arthroscopy. Aspiration can cause chronic fistulae and should be avoided.

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Patient consent obtained.

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Keeping up with every advance in cancer biochemistry and genomics is beyond the capacity of humans and even of Minerva. But disseminated prostate cancer kills many men every year, and it's good to see incremental progress through better understanding of androgen receptor behaviour. A new study shows that the measurement of androgen receptor splice variant 7 (AR-V7) in circulating tumour cells can predict which men with castration resistant prostate cancer are most likely to respond to treatment with chemotherapy rather than enzalutamide or abiraterone (*JAMA Oncology* 2015, doi:10.1001/jamaoncol.2015.1341).

The aged denizens of Darlington may not be getting the drugs they should, according to a study which identified people aged 85 or more who have atrial fibrillation (*Age and Ageing* 2015, doi:10.1093/ageing/afv071). Thirty six per cent received oral anticoagulation while 49% received an antiplatelet agent. Those in the first category had a lower death rate and those in the second had more strokes. But there was obvious confounding by indication, and studies like these cannot help in sharing treatment decisions with very old people.

When faced with strange disorders of eye movement in an off-colour child, Lyme neuroborreliosis should feature on your tick list. Ticks in some parts of Denmark carry *Borrelia burgdorferi* (sensu lato), which has allowed ophthalmologists at Nordsjællands Hospital Hillerød to collect a series of six unusual presentations over three years (*British Journal of Ophthalmology* 2015, doi:10.1136/bjophthalmol-2015-306855). These included nystagmus, sixth nerve palsy, ptosis, and Adie's pupil. Five of the children were generally unwell and four could remember a tick bite.

The latest evidence for the spread of humankind from Africa is lousy. Human hair has always been a nesting place for lice, and seven ancient head louse eggs have recently been found on hair remains recovered from two sites in Israel. Using real time polymerase chain reaction, investigators were able to match louse mitochondrial DNA to that from a sub-clade specific to west Africa (*American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 2015, doi:10.4269/ajtmh.14-0552). If you don't find that rather wonderful, you must be a nit.

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