

All communications to:

The Editor, BMJ, BMA House,
Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7387 4499
Fax: + 44 (0)20 7383 6418/6299
Email: editor@bmj.com

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Department,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square,
London
WC1H 9TD
Tel: + 44 (0)20
7383 6270
Fax: + 44 (0)20
7383 6402
Email: subscriptions@
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Members' inquiries

Membership
Department,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square,
London
WC1H 9JP
Tel: + 44 (0)20
7383 6599
Email: membership@
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Chinese Medical

Association

42 Dongsi Xidajie

Beijing 100710

Tel: + 86 10 6525 7552

Fax: + 86 10 6527 1226

lilis@publica.bj.

cninfo.net

Greece

CCM International

3-5 Konitsis Street

Maroussi

15125 Athens

Greece

Tel: + 301 614 6560/

806 4231

Fax: + 301 806 1765

ccmgroup@

ath.forthnet.gr

Hungary

Literatura Medica Ltd

1027 Budapest

Frankel Leo u 11 II/8

1539 Bp, PO Box 603

Tel: + 36 1 316 4556

Fax: + 36 1 316 9600

litmed@elender.hu

Middle East

CCM Middle East s.a.r.l.

3-5 Konitsis Street

Maroussi

15125 Athens

Greece

Tel: + 301 612 8766/

8866/8403/3937

Fax: + 301 641 3938

hicham@ath.forthnet.gr

Netherlands

Medicom Excel

PO Box 90

The Netherlands

Tel: + 31 35 69 52480

Fax: + 31 35 69 48565

medicom@knoware.nl

Poland

Wydawnictwo Lekarskie

PZWL Sp. z o.o.

00-238 Warszawa,

ul. Długa 38/40

Tel: + 48 22 831 21 61

Fax: + 48 22 831 56 22

Janusz Szajewski

bmj@pzwł.pl

Portugal

Matriz Lda

Rua do Salitre 155-2°

1250 Lisbon

Tel: + 351 1 357 1506

Fax: + 351 1 315 0226

matriz@mail.telepac.pt

Romania

Valentin Tarus

V Tarus Ro Agencies

Str. Octavian,

nr42, Bucuresti 3,

Romania

Tel: + 40-1-321.01.90/

+ 40-1-321.02.87/

+ 40-1-321.32.96

Fax: + 40-1-321.01.90/

+ 40-1-321.02.87/

+ 40-1-321.32.96

bmjro_redactie@vrtarus.ro

South East Asia

Manipal Centre for

Medical Research

New Udayavani Building

Manipal 576119

Karnataka

Tel: + 91 8252 70500

Fax: + 91 8252 70062

glenchristo@yahoo.com

Turkey

CCM Türkiye

Barbaros Bulvari No: 131

PO Box 9 Gaazettepe

80700 Balmuncu

Istanbul

Tel: + 90 212 274 1732

Fax: + 90 212 266 0019

ccm@turknet

West Africa

Gazeen International

Limited

65 Warden Hill Road

Luton LU2 7AE

Tel: + 1525 851888/

+ 1582 583507

Fax: + 1525 853319/

+ 1582 583507

gazeen.gazeen@virgin.net

Editor's choice

A healthy state of ignorance

"No one can in five, or even in fifty, years learn all that one could wish about disease and its prevention and treatment. You have to go on learning all your lives, and, a healthy state of ignorance is a saving grace." So said a Dr Andrews a hundred years ago when welcoming new medical students (p 953). Ignorance is bliss, and economists, practitioners of the dismal science, have a notion of "rational ignorance." It would be wholly irrational to try to learn everything, yet doctors seem