



Secrets of the gut-cam

Elusive small bowel lesions can now be viewed using capsule endoscopy. While promising, this technology is not for everyone. On page 537 Chong et al draw some lessons from their use of the M2A Capsule Endoscope.

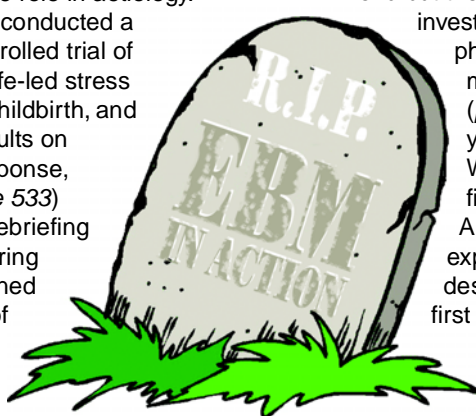
One use of the capsule endoscope is in diagnosing Crohn's disease. However, the little camera is not the only recent advance in the diagnosis and management of this disease. Selby describes some other exciting developments on page 532.

Costing (in)continence

Exactly how much does it cost to care for people who are incontinent of urine? Research is sparse, say Green and colleagues (page 550), who examine the data for over 6000 inpatients in subacute care in Australia and New Zealand.

Debunking debriefing

Recent studies have challenged the role of debriefing after traumatic incidents, but trauma (and indeed debriefing) can take many forms. Many women suffer from stress disorders or depression in the year after giving birth, with the trauma of labour and delivery playing a possible role in aetiology. Priest et al have conducted a randomised controlled trial of structured midwife-led stress debriefing after childbirth, and present their results on page 542. In response, McFarlane (page 533) takes a look at debriefing in general, exploring what can be learned from the failure of this seemingly good idea.



Prisoners and PEP

Several reports have documented the spread of blood-borne diseases within Australian prisons. Two separate instances, in which an inmate infected with HIV and hepatitis B and C admitted to sharing needles and syringes with other inmates, afforded O'Sullivan and colleagues (page 546) the opportunity to observe subsequent seroconversion. For the first time anywhere, they also offered post-exposure prophylaxis against HIV to prisoners at risk.

Ethics, law and genes

If a genetic test were available to predict the time and cause of your final demise, would you have it? Would you want your family, employer or insurance company to have access to the results? Would you allow your children to be tested? Genetic advances don't change basic ethical and legal principles, but they do change the context in which they are applied. On page 582 Otlowski and Williamson discuss some of the dilemmas of *The New Genetics*.

Pulmonary arterial hypertension

Contrary to popular belief, pulmonary arterial hypertension is fairly common, especially secondary to a range of other disease processes. Keogh et al discuss diagnosis and management on page 564.

Final round

If you're an alert and astute MJA reader (and you like a good brawl), you will have noticed that the articles in our *EBM in Action* series often raise readers' hackles. The series is at an end but the final article, Albert's investigation of the use of phenytoin to prevent motion sickness (page 575) will leave you begging for more. Why must the series finish? Del Mar and Anderson (page 535) explains what it was designed to do in the first place, as well as why it will "go down fighting".

Vascular saviours

In the fast-flowing tide of pharmacotherapy, few agents are moving at the rapid pace of the antiplatelet drugs. For the latest on this turbulent area see Hankey and Eikelboom's *New Drugs, Old Drugs* contribution on page 568.

Singapore SARS advice

◆ If you didn't catch Fisher and colleagues' article about the community spread of SARS in Singapore, when it appeared on the eMJA website a couple of weeks ago, be sure to read the print version on page 555. It was fast-tracked because it contains important public health messages for Australia.

Short and sweet?

The increasing pressure on hospitals all over the Western world calls for creative and practical solutions. One initiative, aimed at relieving access block while providing timely, cost-effective, quality care, is the short-stay observation unit. Do these wards achieve their aims? Daly et al present a systematic review of the published studies on page 559.

Trials on trial: now recruiting

A trial comparing different treatment regimens for tinea capitis in children, described by Commens (page 577), found that the traditional treatment (griseofulvin) outperformed a newer drug (terbinafine). The study included 165 patients — an adequate number of participants to achieve meaningful results. This was no mean feat when you consider that the patients came from 22 centres in Europe and South America. Hague et al give the lowdown on recruitment on page 579.

Another time ... another place ...

What of the allegedly indisputable nature of the evidence on which so much of the so-called scientific medicine is based? On close inspection, much of that turns out to be disputable and even undependable. In a word, uncertain.

Sherwin B Nuland, 1998