

MINERVA

Send comments or suggestions to Minerva: minerva@bmj.com

Coffee prolongs life. Minerva was delighted to see this affirmed by a new dose-response meta-analysis of prospective studies (*American Journal of Epidemiology* 2014, doi:10.1093/aje/kwu194). The largest risk reductions were seen for four cups per day for all cause mortality (16%, 95% CI 13% to 18%) and three cups per day for death from cardiovascular disease (21%, 16% to 26%). Coffee consumption was not associated with death from cancer. Readers who are familiar with JS Bach's dramatic "Coffee Cantata BWV 211" will be happy to know that the fair coffee drinking Lieschen was right to hold out against her censorious father.

Getting fat in adolescence really has nothing to recommend it. Nor is there any easy answer. A well designed Australian study (ATLAS) tried a complex intervention with provision of tailored exercise and smartphone monitoring (*Pediatrics* 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.2014-1012). The intervention did result in obesity prone boys from low income families becoming fitter and improving "key weight related behaviours," but it had no significant effect on body mass index, waist circumference, per cent body fat, or physical activity.

The trouble is that the earlier you become obese, the more harm it seems to do. A new study links obesity recorded at hospital admission with subsequent dementia (*Postgraduate Medical Journal* 2014, doi:10.1136/postgradmedj-2014-132571). People classed as obese at 80 or more showed a 22% reduced risk of subsequent dementia; at 70-79 years the risk was neutral; whereas before this it was raised, the highest risk being 3.5-fold in people aged 30-39.

One of the problems that overweight and obese office workers face is discomfort while working in a continuously seated position. An Australian trial compared this with changing between a standing and seated work position every 30 minutes using a height adjustable workstation (*Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 2014, doi:10.1136/oemed-2014-102348). Sure enough, this significantly reduced fatigue and lower back discomfort in overweight or obese office workers while maintaining work productivity.

Every day thousands of perfectly healthy people troop in to clinics and surgeries to have their previously raised blood pressure checked and their repeat prescriptions renewed. One in a 100 may benefit, but we don't know who they are.



A 4 month old girl presented with a one week history of intermittent fever, irritability, and crying. Unilateral swelling was present over the right mandible, forearm, and clavicle, with some redness. No tenderness or facial palsy was noted. Her sepsis profile was negative, but the erythrocyte sedimentation rate, C reactive protein, platelet count, and alkaline phosphatase were raised. Radiology showed thickened and irregular bones. A wait and watch policy was followed. Spontaneous remission of clinical features occurred after two months. Caffey disease is a self limiting condition with good prognosis. The diagnosis is mainly clinical with no diagnostic test being involved.

Pravakar Mishra, associate professor, Department of Paediatrics, SCB Medical College, Cuttack, India, **Rashmi Ranjan Das** (rrdas05@gmail.com), assistant professor, Department of Paediatrics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, India
Patient consent obtained.

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Minerva was interested to read a review (*Open Heart* 2014, doi:10.1136/openhrt-2014-000048) of the uncertainties and contradictions in management of hypertension. She feels it is time that patients knew what the facts are and had a say in their lifetime treatment for this risk factor.

A study of people taking drugs for knee pain in six European countries finds that knee osteoarthritis (OA) is painful and disabling (*Rheumatology* 2014, doi:10.1093/rheumatology/keu332). "The fact that 54% of patients in this real-world setting had



A 45 year old man with an ulcerated nodule on his right leg

Try the picture quiz in **ENDGAMES**, p 38

persistent moderate to severe pain suggests that currently prescribed pain treatments for knee OA are not meeting the needs of the majority of patients." Correct. It's a choice between ineffective paracetamol, non-steroidal drugs that can harm the heart and gastrointestinal tract, gels that scarcely work, physiotherapy, opioids that cause dependency and lose effectiveness, arthroscopic washouts that do nothing, or surgery.

Diabetes may be one of the most common causes of end stage renal disease, but a new whole population study from Scotland (*QJM* 2014, doi:10.1093/qjmed/hcu170) shows that the risk for individuals is small: 1.63% in type 1 diabetes and 0.58% in type 2. And nearly a half of those with type 2 diabetes who are on renal replacement therapy have a non-diabetic primary cause for renal failure. Still, this is not a good place to be: the median survival time from start of renal replacement therapy was 3.84 years in type 1 diabetes and 2.16 years in type 2.

The diaphragm is a Cinderella organ, patiently working below stairs on behalf of her demanding stepsisters, the lungs. She can faint and nobody may notice because few doctors think of phrenic neuropathy as a primary diagnosis. However, a new study in patients suspected of having the condition (*Neurology* 2014, doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000000841) shows that simple diaphragmatic ultrasound by an experienced operator is 93% sensitive and 100% specific for the diagnosis of neuromuscular diaphragmatic dysfunction. This is when compared with the final clinical diagnosis of clinicians blinded to the diaphragm ultrasound results, who take into account other diagnostic investigations, including chest radiographs, fluoroscopy, phrenic nerve conduction studies, diaphragm electromyography, and pulmonary function tests.

Welcome to the Apeldoorn Dizziness Centre. Minerva was enchanted by the name of this facility, which is designed to promote the vestibular health of the population of Gelderland in the Netherlands. Where better to perform a rapid review of the efficacy of vestibular rehabilitation in patients with benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (*Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery* 2014, doi:10.1177/0194599814546479)? Alas, it adds nothing to standard canalith repositioning manoeuvres in patients with this condition.

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