Encore

The case for total hip replacement revision
A Swedish multicentre study of 4664 revisions showed that revision because of infection was 1% after eight years overall. The revision rate for loosening of the prosthesis was 6% at nine years. Some types of prosthesis predictably fared better than others. In rheumatoid arthritis the results were similar, though young patients did less well.


Wegener's granulomatosis and antineutrophil cytoplasmic antibody (ANCA) titre
The ANCA test is not specific for Wegener's granulomatosis, but a high proportion of patients who have the disease are ANCA positive at some time. A significant rise in the titre of this antibody is strongly suggestive that the disease is relapsing and in need of treatment with cyclophosphamide and prednisolone.


Recycling hospital waste
Hospitals produce an enormous amount of waste material—rubber gloves, paper, organic waste, glass, and plastic among others. It is a fact that £750 million of waste is thrown away in Great Britain alone, not all from hospitals of course. But they can play their part in recycling much of it, and a recent article describes how that may be done. There is a sore and increasingly pressing need to stop cluttering up our planet with our cast offs. It makes good economical sense too.

*Hospital Development* 1990; 7: 33.

Hydroxychloroquine retinal toxicity and screening
Because hydroxychloroquine allegedly may cause retinal toxicity the current wisdom is that the eyes should be screened every six to 12 months. A recent five year study from Cardiff suggests that this is probably not necessary. They found no evidence of retinal toxicity in 73 patients examined.


Bone circulation and its pharmacology
A recent study in dogs' tibiae showed that the vascular bed in the bone responds actively to vasoconstrictors but less so to vasodilators. There was some evidence too that α1 adrenoceptors, muscarinic receptors, and prostaglandin H2/thromboxane A2 receptors may be present as well in the bone vascular bed. This may have considerable therapeutic implications.


Venous thrombosis, hip replacement, and ultrasonography
Postoperative thrombosis of the femoral and popliteal veins remains a bugbear for orthopaedic surgeons carrying out total hip replacement. A reliable, non-invasive technique for discovering the presence of a thrombosis must be welcome, therefore. Investigation from Stanford, California, showed that B mode ultrasonography was just as good as venography in detecting this.


Weight bearing and bone formation
Traditionally, fractures are treated by immobilisation with a period of non-weight-bearing. Rheumatologists have long had a sneaking feeling that this promotes disuse osteoporosis. An experiment on dogs shows that if they are allowed to weight bear more woven bone is formed, there are less disuse changes, and the ultimate repair seems to be stronger.


Elderly people and shoulder pain
A recent leader draws attention to this problem. About a quarter of elderly people have pain in the shoulder and the causes of this are various. They range from osteoarthritis of the acromioclavicular joint, rupture, and rotator cuff lesions. Frozen shoulder seems to be less common, and careful examination is essential if the correct diagnosis and treatment are to be achieved. The problem is common and can often be dealt with at primary care level.


How often should we x ray joints?
As often as is necessary seems to be the answer. Compared with radiation from natural sources (such as air travel and radon gas exposure in our homes) the contribution from doctors seems to be reasonably within bounds. There is never any room for complacency, however, and we should keep our requests for radiological tests to a minimum. It is so easy in someone with say osteoarthritis of the knee to forget how many times we have done it previously on that patient.


Occupational health services and health care workers
In the United Kingdom 5% of the national workforce is employed in the health care industry and yet very little attention is paid to their health. In fact certain subgroups may have a higher mortality than their socioeconomic peers. It is high time that much more attention was given to their special needs and problems. We neglect our own backyard.


Classification of vasculitis
The American College of Rheumatology has recently published criteria for the classification of vasculitis. The various papers include separate ones on polyanteritis nodosa, Churg-Strauss syndrome, Wegener's granulomatosis, and the other main forms of small vessel disease.


The junction of synovium and cartilage in the knee
In the normal knee a wedge of tissue is found at the junction between cartilage and synovium and overlying cartilage. Immunohistochemically it is similar to the synovium. Immunocompetent cells can thus be seen adjacent to bone, and pannus in rheumatoid arthritis may develop from it. Perioseal cells rather than synovial ones may be operative in such repair mechanisms as the production of osteophytes.


Health care in Canada
A comparison of Canada and the United States shows that all Canadians have health care insurance, whereas one seventh of those in the United States do not. Furthermore, the income of Canadian doctors is only one third less than those in the United States while the cost of health care is very much less. Canadian doctors seem to work harder and have less overhead expenses.


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