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ARTICLES

A Prospective Study of Aspirin Use and the Risk for Colorectal Adenoma 157

A.T. Chan, E.L. Giovannucci, E.S. Schernhammer, G.A. Colditz, D.J. Hunter, W.C. Willett, and C.S. Fuchs

Taking aspirin regularly is associated with a reduced risk for colorectal adenoma. The greatest effect occurred at substantially higher doses than those recommended for prevention of cardiovascular disease. Before recommending aspirin chemoprevention for all adults, we must understand the risks and benefits of routine aspirin use at these higher doses.

The Metabolic Syndrome and Chronic Kidney Disease in U.S. Adults 167

J. Chen, P. Muntner, L.L. Hamm, D.W. Jones, V. Batuman, V. Fonseca, P.K. Whelton, and J. He

The metabolic syndrome is defined as 3 or more of the following: hypertension, hyperglycemia, low high-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, high triglyceride level, and abdominal obesity. The greater the number of these factors, the greater a person's risk for microalbuminuria and chronic kidney disease.

Low-Molecular-Weight Heparin Compared with Intravenous Unfractionated Heparin for Treatment of Pulmonary Embolism. A Meta-Analysis of Randomized, Controlled Trials 175

D.J. Quinlan, A. McQuillan, and J.W. Eikelboom

Fixed-dose low-molecular-weight heparin appears to be as effective and safe as dose-adjusted intravenous unfractionated heparin for the initial treatment of pulmonary embolism. This conclusion does not necessarily apply to patients with massive pulmonary embolism because the trials excluded them.

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

Changes in the Use of Postmenopausal Hormone Therapy after the Publication of Clinical Trial Results 184

J.S. Haas, C.P. Kaplan, E.P. Gerstenberger, and K. Kerlikowske

According to this study, more public media attention is associated with greater adoption of clinical research results. The release of the Women's Health Initiative trial results was associated with a greater decline in postmenopausal hormone therapy use than occurred after publication of the Heart and Estrogen/progestin Replacement Study results,

which received much less attention from newspapers and television.

ACADEMIA AND CLINIC

Sources of Variation and Bias in Studies of Diagnostic Accuracy. A Systematic Review 189

P. Whiting, A.W.S. Rutjes, J.B. Reitsma, A.S. Glas, P.M.M. Bossuyt, and J. Kleijnen

Many factors in measuring the sensitivity and specificity of diagnostic tests can lead to biased estimates or variation between studies. Empirical evidence about the size and effect of these issues is limited.

UPDATE

Update in Cardiology 203

E. Rapaport

This Update focuses on heart failure, acute coronary syndromes, hypertension, and lowering of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels. The newer clinical trials in these fields are changing approaches to cardiac care.

REVIEW

Effect of Alcohol Consumption on Diabetes Mellitus. A Systematic Review 211

A.A. Howard, J.H. Arnsten, and M.N. Gourevitch

Moderate alcohol consumption is associated with a decreased risk for developing diabetes mellitus and a decreased risk for heart disease in persons with diabetes. The long-term effects of alcohol consumption on glycemic control and noncardiac complications in persons with diabetes are poorly understood.

PERSPECTIVE

"Special Scrutiny": A Targeted Form of Research Protocol Review 220

C. Levine, R. Faden, C. Grady, D. Hammerschmidt, L. Eckenwiler, and J. Sugarman, on behalf of the Consortium to Examine Clinical Research Ethics

Existing laws and regulations protect research participants. However, some research protocols need additional "special scrutiny" because they create unusual ethical problems. The aim of special scrutiny is full protection for all research participants.

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EDITORIALS

Aspirin Prevention of Colorectal Cancer: More or Less? 224

R.S. Sandler

The concept of cancer chemoprevention is tantalizing. If we had a cheap, nontoxic pill that could reduce the risk for cancer, we might reduce the need for surgery or toxic chemotherapy. In this issue, Chan and colleagues provide additional evidence that we may already have such an agent for colorectal cancer. Its identity? Aspirin.

The Media Matter: A Call for Straightforward Medical Reporting 226

L.M. Schwartz and S. Woloshin

Over half of U.S. adults report that they follow health news closely. Thus, the press is well positioned to educate the public about health and health risks and what medicine can (and cannot) do. Researchers and medical journals have an obligation to help the media do their job responsibly.

AD LIBITUM

Coming Up Early 228

C.L. Bowron

ON BEING A DOCTOR

Possession 229

C.G. Helman

They sit across the desk from me, the young couple, both tense and distracted. I am very new to family practice, and John is almost exactly the same age as I am. We are the same height and shape, and we have the same style of moustache. We are even dressed in a similar way. But

there's a pinched, sallow look about his face, as if the mirror I am peering into is blurred and slightly dusty.

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A.B. Weisse

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