

News and Views

Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi Launched

Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi was launched recently by the Union Minister for Earth Sciences and Environment, Dr Harsh Vardhan. The System is designed to predict extreme air pollution events and give alerts to take necessary steps as per Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) of the Government of India. The air pollution system has been developed jointly by the scientists at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, India Meteorological Department and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF).

Speaking at the launch, Dr Harsh Vardhan said that the early warning system will help in proactively forewarning, 3-4 days in advance, any large scale air pollution events which may occur over the Delhi region... (PIB, Ministry of Earth Science, October 15, 2018).

Zika Update: 72 Zika Cases Detected in Jaipur

As the number of people infected with Zika virus rose to 72 in Rajasthan, the Union Health Ministry has asked states to check mosquito breeding and intensify vector control strategies to contain the spread of the disease. Sanjeeva Kumar, Additional Secretary (Health), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare held a meeting with various state representatives through video conferencing. He asked them to implement the guidelines as prescribed under the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme for effective control of Zika.

"States have been asked to intensify vector control strategies which include anti-larvae activities and fogging, and also follow the guidelines as prescribed under the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme for effective control of Zika virus disease," a health ministry official said... (ET Health-PTI, Oct. 16, 2018).

Cancer Survivors are at Risk for Heart Failure During and After Pregnancy

Young women previously treated for cancer with chemotherapy or radiation therapy with a prior history of cardiotoxicity are more likely to develop clinical congestive heart failure (CHF) during and after pregnancy, according to a study published Oct. 15, 2018 in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

Shorter IV Antibiotic Course Effective for Infants with Uncomplicated, Late-onset GBS Bacteremia

Shortened IV antibiotic courses are safe and effective for infants with uncomplicated, late-onset Group B Streptococcus (GBS) bacteremia, with low rates of disease recurrence and treatment failure. Three patients (1.8%) in the shortened IV duration group experienced GBS recurrence vs. 14 patients (2.3%) in the prolonged IV duration group. These findings from a retrospective study are reported online Oct. 11, 2018 in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Empagliflozin Improves Glycemic Control in Type 1 Diabetes but Increases Risk of Diabetic Ketoacidosis

Results from the Empagliflozin as Adjunctive to Insulin Therapy (EASE) program presented October 4 at the recent European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) 2018 Annual Meeting in Berlin show that while empagliflozin improved glycemic control and weight in type 1 diabetes without increasing hypoglycemia, it also increased the risk for diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).

Most People cannot Differentiate Between OCD and OCPD, Say Study

According to new research published in *Community Mental Health Journal*, the general public has trouble understanding differences between obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD). Binghamton University PhD student Elyse Stewart, lead author said, "Individuals who have OCD experience extreme distress related to unwanted intrusive thoughts or feelings. They engage in a compulsion (some behavior or mental act) to reduce this distress. Individuals with OCPD are characterized by a preoccupation with perfectionism and orderliness that can interfere with their ability to be flexible in different situations."

Health Minister Reviews Activities for Prevention and Control of Zika Seasonal Influenza

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Shri JP Nadda, held a high level meeting to review the activities for prevention and control of Zika virus and seasonal influenza. He reassured the states for all support from the Union Government. For control of Zika virus in Rajasthan, the Health Minister emphasized on the need

for continuous monitoring. He stated that the Union Health Ministry is in regular contact with the State officials. Secretary (Health) is monitoring the situation on a daily basis in regular coordination with the State Health Secretary.

Shri Nadda stressed on the need for undertaking exhaustive control measures including intensive fogging for next month in order to ensure vector control in the area. He also stressed on strengthening surveillance to facilitate the early identification of cases. The Union Health Minister urged the people to not panic and cooperate with the health officials in controlling the breeding of the vectors. He further said that there was no shortage of medicines and testing kits and required support will be provided to the State. He stated that awareness is the key in controlling the vector borne diseases and no stone should be left unturned to reach out to the people... (PIB, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 16th Oct. 2018).

Youth Road Safety Learners Licence Programme Launched

Shri Mansukh L Mandaviya, Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways and Chemical and Fertilizer launched the Youth Road Safety Learners Licence programme in New Delhi. The program is a PPP initiative to be run in collaboration with Diageo India and the Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE), and attempts to bring a formal and structured training program for young, first-time drivers as they apply for learner's license.

Launching this first-of-its-kind training program in the country, Shri Mansukh L Mandaviya said, road safety is of prime importance for the Government as recent times have seen an alarming rise in road fatalities especially among the youth. Rash driving, drunken driving, lack of adequate safety measures like not wearing helmets are some of the major factors resulting in high road accidents. He said, the government is committed to making its vision of safer roads and cities a reality. This program will help the Government achieve its target of reducing road accidents by 50 percent by 2020... (PIB, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, 15th Oct., 2018)

Inducing Labor at 39 Weeks of Gestation is Safe and Beneficial Option

Analysis of data from five randomized controlled trials and published in the journal *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology* found that elective induction of labor in uncomplicated singleton pregnancy from 39 weeks' gestation is not associated with higher rates of

complications and, in fact, may reduce the risk of cesarean section, hypertensive disease of pregnancy, and need for respiratory support in newborns.

Psoriasis Patients with Hypertension are at Greater Risk of CV Interventions

Psoriasis is associated with a greater risk for cardiovascular (CV) interventions in patients with hypertension compared to hypertensive patients without psoriasis, suggests a study published Oct. 16, 2018 in the *Journal of Dermatology*. The study suggests that more intense assessments for CV interventions may be necessary in patients with concurrent hypertension and psoriasis vis-à-vis general hypertension patients.

A Majority of Older Patients are Open to Deprescribing their Medications

Findings of a survey published Oct. 15, 2018 in *JAMA Internal Medicine* show that 92% of older adults would be willing to stop taking 1 or more of their medications if their physician said this was possible and 66.6% wanted to reduce the number of medicines that they were taking.

Young Patients Show No Deterioration Ongoing Brain Development Initially After Onset of Schizophrenia

According to a study published online October 3, 2018 in *JAMA Psychiatry*, during the initial 1 to 2 years after illness onset, young individuals with schizophrenia showed deficits in dorsolateral prefrontal cortex activation and cognitive control, with developmental trajectories comparable to those of healthy controls. Younger age at onset was not associated with reduced cognition or activation.

Talazoparib Approved for Patients with Advanced BRCA-positive Breast Cancer

The FDA has approved talazoparib (Talzenna) for the treatment of locally advanced or metastatic breast cancer patients with a germline BRCA mutation. Talazoparib, a poly-ADP ribose polymerase (PARP) inhibitor, is indicated for patients who have received no more than three prior cytotoxic chemotherapy regimens, including an anthracycline and a taxane (if not contraindicated) either in the neoadjuvant, adjuvant or metastatic setting.

Many Children who Appear Healthy may have Metabolic Problems

In a study reported Oct. 17, 2018 in *Acta Paediatrica*, more than a quarter of otherwise healthy 6-year-old children may have metabolic risk factors that put

them at increased risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD). Among 212 children in the study, 26% showed abnormal metabolic profiles, including insulin resistance, a sign of type 2 diabetes. Insulin resistance was present in 28% of those with overweight or obesity and 5% of those with normal weight.

Nocturnal Seizures may Increase Risk of Sudden Unexplained Death in Severe Epilepsy

People who died of sudden unexplained death in epilepsy (SUDEP) were more likely to have nocturnal convulsive seizures in general and a higher frequency of nocturnal convulsive seizures, as per a new study published online in *Neurology* on September 21. Monitoring patients with severe epilepsy in residential care facilities during the night reduced SUDEP rate.

Initial Intensive Weight Loss may Prevent Type 2 Diabetes in Persons with Prediabetes

A 2-month weight loss regimen using meal substitutes followed by long-term weight maintenance through diet and exercise may be an optimal approach to preventing type 2 diabetes through lifestyle in adults with prediabetes. These findings from the Prevention of Diabetes Through Lifestyle Intervention and Population Studies in Europe and Around the World (PREVIEW) study were presented October 5 here at the recent European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) 2018 Annual Meeting in Berlin, Germany.

C. difficile Spores Survive High Temperatures of Hospital Laundering

Washing contaminated hospital bed sheets in a commercial washing machine with industrial detergent at high disinfecting temperatures failed to remove all traces of *Clostridium difficile*, a bacteria that causes infectious diarrhea, suggesting that linens could be a source of infection among patients and even other hospitals, according to a study published October 16, 2018 in *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*.

Patients with Early-stage Breast Cancer Still Undergo Routine Imaging Despite Guidelines Recommending Otherwise

Guidelines recommend against routine imaging in patients with early-stage breast cancer who are at low risk for metastasis, two new studies have found that these guidelines are not being consistently followed. In the first study, the authors report that 30% of patients with early-stage breast cancer underwent staging imaging, despite guidelines recommending against it.

The prevalence of inappropriate imaging varied from 26% to 68% among oncologists. The second study found that unnecessary scanning occurred in up to 19% of patients with stage I to II breast cancer. Both papers were presented at the ASCO Quality Care Symposium.

Global Health Organizations Commit to New Ways of Working Together for Greater Impact

Eleven heads of the world's leading health and development organizations signed a landmark commitment on Tuesday to find new ways of working together to accelerate progress towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO), the initiative unites the work of 11 organizations, with others set to join in the next phase. The commitment follows a request from Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of Ghana, and Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway, with support from United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, to develop a global action plan to define how global actors can better collaborate to accelerate progress towards the health-related targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

"Healthy people are essential for sustainable development – to ending poverty, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and protecting the environment. However, despite great strides made against many of the leading causes of death and disease, we must redouble our efforts or we will not reach several of the health-related targets," the organizations announced at the World Health Summit in Berlin. "The Global Action Plan represents an historic commitment to new ways of working together to accelerate progress towards meeting the 2030 goals. We are committed to redefine how our organizations work together to deliver more effective and efficient support to countries and to achieve better health and well-being for all people."

The group has agreed to develop new ways of working together to maximize resources and measure progress in a more transparent and engaging way. The first phase of the plan's development is organized under three strategic approaches: align, accelerate and account.

A Simple Test may Help Predict Long-term Outcome After Stroke

A simple test taken within a week of a stroke may help predict how well people will have recovered up to 3 years later, according to a study published in

the October 17, 2018 in *Neurology*. that those who had thinking problems within 1 week of the stroke were seven times more like to die during the 3 years of the study than those who did not have thinking problems. Those with thinking problems on the first test were also five times more likely to have problems with their motor skills than those who did not have thinking problems early on.

Study Identifies Risk Factors for Fulminant *C. difficile* Infection After Cardiac Surgery

A single-center, retrospective cohort study published online Sept. 27, 2018 in *BMC Anesthesiology* has identified type 2 diabetes mellitus, preoperative ventilation, utilization of more than 8 units of red blood cell concentrates or of more than 5 fresh-frozen plasma units and a cross-clamp time >130 minutes as predictors of a fulminant *C. difficile* infection.

People Who Commute Through Natural Environments Daily Report Better Mental Health

Results from the PHENOTYPE project show that people commuting through natural environments on a daily basis had on average a 2.74 point higher mental health score than those who commuted through natural environments less frequently. This association was even stronger among people who reported active commuting i.e., walking or cycling. Natural environments were defined as all public and private outdoor spaces that contain 'green' and/or 'blue' natural elements such as street trees, forests, city parks and natural parks/reserves, and also included all types of water bodies. These findings are published in *Environment International*.

Children with Inflammatory Bowel Disease have Higher Risk of Mortality

Children who develop inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) (ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease) have an increased risk of death, both in childhood and later in life, says a study published online Oct. 17, 2018 in the journal *Gastroenterology*. Children who developed IBD before the age of 18 had a three- to fivefold higher mortality rate than people without IBD, both during childhood and into adulthood.

Adult-onset Type 1 Diabetes is Frequently Misdiagnosed

According to new research presented October 4, 2018 at the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) 2018 Annual Meeting in Berlin, onset of type 1

diabetes (T1DM) after age 30 years is common and is frequently misdiagnosed as type 2 diabetes (T2DM) in clinical practice. The study found that 21% of those with insulin-treated diabetes who were diagnosed after the age of 30 had severe insulin deficiency, confirming T1DM. Out of this group, 39% did not receive insulin when they were initially diagnosed, with 46% of those individuals self-reporting that they had T2DM. A rapid progression to insulin dependence was highly predictive of late-onset T1DM with 84% of those with the disease requiring insulin within just 1 year.

EMA Approves Bevespi Aerosphere as a New Maintenance Bronchodilator Treatment

The European Medicines Agency's (EMA's) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has recommended marketing for the medicinal product Bevespi Aerosphere, intended for the maintenance treatment to relieve symptoms in adult patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Bevespi Aerosphere is a fixed dose combination of a long-acting beta-2 receptor agonist (formoterol fumarate dihydrate) and a long-acting muscarinic antagonist (glycopyrronium). It will be available as a suspension for inhalation (7.2 µg/5.0 µg).

Atrial Fibrillation Progression is Associated with Increased Adverse Events

Results of a survey of the patients with atrial fibrillation (AF) in Fushimi-ku, Kyoto published in the October 2018 issue of the journal *Stroke* show that AF progression was associated with increased risk of clinical adverse events - systemic embolism and ischemic stroke - during arrhythmia progression period from paroxysmal to sustained (persistent or permanent). The risk of adverse events was transiently elevated during progression period and declined to the level equivalent to SAF after the progression.

Insulin Resistance is Prevalent in Children as Young as Age 6

A significant percentage of 6-year-old children showed abnormal metabolic profiles, including insulin resistance, which increased their risk of CVD in a longitudinal cohort study of healthy children, the results of which were published October 17, 2018 in the journal *Acta Paediatrica*. Fifty-five of the 212 children had one or more risk factors for metabolic syndrome requiring action. Waist circumference was a stronger marker for metabolic alterations than body mass index (BMI).

Shorter Duration of Sleep Apnea Increases Mortality Risk

Duration of the apnea-hypopnea event is a predictor of mortality in obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). According to the study published online October 19, 2018 in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*, individuals with shorter respiratory events may be predisposed to increased ventilatory instability and/or have augmented autonomic nervous system responses that increase the likelihood of adverse health outcomes.

Better Cardiorespiratory Fitness Leads to Longer Life

A retrospective study of 1,22,007 patients who underwent exercise treadmill testing at Cleveland Clinic between Jan. 1, 1991, and Dec. 31, 2014, to measure all-cause mortality relating to the benefits of exercise and fitness found that increased cardiorespiratory fitness was directly associated with reduced long-term mortality, with no limit on the positive effects of aerobic fitness. Extreme aerobic fitness was associated with the greatest benefit, particularly in older patients (70 and older) and in those with hypertension. The study is published October 19, 2018 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Network Open*.

India to Host UNICEF's Global Meet on Maternal and Child Health

India will be the global host of UNICEF's Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health stakeholders meeting, including participation from nearly hundred countries, this December, officials said. The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Forum will emphasise the importance of people-centred accountability, bringing forward the voices and lived realities of women, children and adolescents through innovative programming and creative projects.

The Forum will be hosted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) this December.

The UNICEF said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Chile President Michelle Bachelet and the chair of PMNCH would deliver the keynote addresses.. (*Economic Times-PTI, Oct. 20, 2018*).

Hospitalized Acute MI Patients with Hyperglycemia at Risk of Ventricular Tachycardia

Patients hospitalized with acute myocardial infarction (MI) with hyperglycemia are at increased risk for developing ventricular tachycardia (VT). The

study reported October 19, 2018 in *Cardiovascular Diabetology* suggests that these patients should be carefully monitored early after hospital admission, to reduce their risk of VT.

Biopsies of Hand Tissue could be an Early Signal of Life-threatening Cardiac Amyloidosis

A new research from the Cleveland Clinic has suggested that biopsies of hand tissue could be an early signal of life-threatening cardiac amyloidosis. They identified amyloid deposits in 10.2% of patients undergoing carpal tunnel release surgery. The study, published online in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, contained wide inclusion criteria; all men in their 50s or older and all women in their 60s or older were eligible unless they had known amyloidosis or carpal tunnel syndrome considered to be from trauma or arthritis.

Drinking More Water may Help Prevent Recurrent Cystitis

According to a randomized controlled study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, published online October 1, 2018, women who drank more water 1.5 L of water daily reduced the episodes of cystitis by 50% and they were also prescribed fewer antibiotics.

Heart Patients should Move Around Every 20 Minutes to Reduce Mortality Risk

Patients with heart disease should interrupt sedentary time every 20 minutes with a 7-minute bout of light physical activities such as standing up and walking at a casual pace, recommends a study presented at the ongoing Canadian Cardiovascular Congress (CCC) 2018 in Toronto, Canada. As per the study, during each hour of sitting time, heart patients should take three breaks which add up to 21 minutes of light physical activity. This will expend 770 kcal a day, an amount associated with a lower risk of premature death.

FDA Panel Backs Prucalopride for Chronic Idiopathic Constipation

The Gastrointestinal Drugs Advisory Committee of the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) voted unanimously (10 yes, 0 no) to recommend prucalopride tablets for the treatment of adults with chronic idiopathic constipation.

One Lakh Benefitted Under PMJAY in 1 Month of its Launch, Says Health Minister

Nearly a month after the roll out of the Centre's PMJAY health insurance scheme, one lakh people have availed

the benefits of the ambitious program, Union Health Minister JP Nadda said recently.

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana or PMJAY (previously Ayushman Bharat), touted as the world's largest health insurance program, was launched pan-India by the Prime Minister from Jharkhand on September 23. The scheme is expected to benefit up to 55 crore people, providing them an annual health cover of Rs. 5 lakh for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization through a network of Empanelled Health Care Providers (EHCP). There is no cap on family size and age in the scheme. On October 5, 2 weeks after the launch of the PMJAY, Indu Bhushan, CEO of National Health Agency, said around 38,000 people have availed the benefits of the scheme ... (*ET Health-PTI, October 21, 2018*)

Evaluation of Out-of-office BP is Important for Risk Stratification in Treated Patients with Normal Clinic BP

A systematic review and meta-analysis examining the prognostic value of masked uncontrolled hypertension concluded that the risk of CV events and all-cause mortality is significantly higher in patients with masked uncontrolled hypertension than in those with controlled hypertension, which was independent of follow-up length and types of studied events. No difference between the prognostic information was observed with masked uncontrolled hypertension detected either by ambulatory BP monitoring (ABPM) or home BP measurement. The meta-analysis, published in the October 2018 issue of *Hypertension* suggests that evaluation of out-of-office BP is relevant for risk stratification in treated patients with normal clinic BP.

EU Panel Recommends Marketing Authorization for First Dengue Vaccine

The European Medicines Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has recommended granting a marketing authorization for Dengvaxia (dengue tetravalent vaccine [live, attenuated]), for the prevention of dengue caused by dengue virus serotypes 1, 2, 3 and 4 in people who are between 9 and 45 years old, live in an endemic area and already had a prior dengue virus infection.

Pilot Study Shows Bioelectronic Medicine Treatment is Effective for Lupus

A bioelectronic medicine device was effective in reducing pain and fatigue in patients with lupus, according to results of a pilot trial to be presented at the American

College of Rheumatology/Association of Rheumatology Health Professional's (ACR/ARHP) Annual Meeting in Chicago. Stimulation of the vagus nerve significantly reduced pain and fatigue associated with lupus.

Combination of Palbociclib and Fulvestrant Prolongs Overall Survival

Among patients with hormone-receptor-positive, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-negative advanced breast cancer who had sensitivity to previous endocrine therapy, treatment with palbociclib-fulvestrant led to longer overall survival compared to treatment with placebo-fulvestrant. These findings are published October 20, 2018 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Tegaserod Approved for IBS with Constipation in Women with No Heart Disease

The Gastrointestinal Drugs Advisory Committee of the US FDA voted overwhelmingly (11 yes, 1 no) to recommend reintroducing tegaserod maleate (Zelnorm, Sloan Pharma) for the treatment of IBS with constipation (IBS-C) in women without a history of CV ischemic disease and who have no more than one risk factor for CVD.

Poor Oral Health Linked to Higher BP and Also Worse BP Control

Poor oral health may interfere with BP control in people diagnosed with hypertension. People with high BP taking medication for their condition are more likely to benefit from the therapy if they have good oral health, according to new research published October 22, 2018 in the journal *Hypertension*. In the study, patients with severe periodontitis had systolic pressure that was, on average, 3 mmHg higher than those with good oral health.

Updated Clinical Report on Healthcare Transitions for Youth and Young Adults

A new clinical report, released jointly by American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and American College of Physicians (ACP) published online Oct. 22 in the journal *Pediatrics* provides new practice-based quality improvement guidance on key elements of transition from adolescence to adulthood: planning, transfer and integration into adult care. The 2018 report describes an evidence-informed, structured healthcare transition process called the Six Core Elements of Healthcare Transition that guides clinicians in the development of transition services.

Study Shows Antipsychotics Ineffective for Delirium in Critically Ill Patients in ICU

Critically ill patients in intensive care units (ICUs) did not benefit from two antipsychotic drugs - haloperidol or ziprasidone - used to treat delirium, according to findings from the Modifying the Incidence of Delirium USA (MIND USA) study published online Oct. 22, 2018 in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The two drugs did not affect delirium, survival, length of ICU or hospital stay or safety.

Adjunctive Satralizumab Reduces Neuromyelitis Optica Relapses

Findings of a study presented at the 34th Congress of the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) 2018 in Berlin demonstrate that addition of satralizumab - anti-interleukin-6 receptor monoclonal antibody - to standard treatment for neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder reduced the relapse rate by 62%.

People with Short Apneas and Hypopneas at Higher Mortality Risk

How long a person with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) stops breathing may be a better predictor of mortality risk from OSA than the number of times they stop breathing, according to findings from the Sleep Heart Health Study published online Oct. 19, 2018 in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*. The study participants who had short apneas and hypopneas were at greater risk of dying over a decade of follow-up than those who had long apneas.

Yoga + CBT Improves Chances of Smoking Cessation

Breath easy, a randomized controlled trial of more than 200 adult smokers showed that those who took part in an 8-week program of smoking-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and twice-a-week sessions of Iyengar yoga had 37% greater odds of achieving smoking abstinence at end of treatment than those who underwent CBT along with general wellness classes. This effect was more evident in heavy smokers. These findings are published online October 6, 2018 in the journal *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*.

Dupilumab Gets FDA Approval as Add-on Maintenance Therapy For Moderate-to-severe Asthma

The US FDA has approved dupilumab (Dupixent, Sanofi/Regeneron) as "add-on maintenance therapy in

patients with moderate-to-severe asthma aged 12 years and older with an eosinophilic phenotype or with oral corticosteroid-dependent asthma". Dupilumab will be available as an injectable solution in prefilled syringes with 200-mg and 300-mg doses administered every other week.

Exosomal Alpha-synuclein Differentiates Parkinson's Disease from Multiple System Atrophy

Results of a pilot study presented at the annual American Neurological Association meeting in Atlanta show that fractions of alpha-synuclein in neuronal and oligodendroglial exosomes were different enough to distinguish Parkinson's from multiple system atrophy (MSA) patients with 90% sensitivity and specificity. Both Parkinson's disease (PD) and MSA are characterized by an abnormal deposition of alpha-synuclein aggregates in the brain.

Childhood Obesity Increases the Risk of Slipped Capital Femoral Epiphysis

Compared to a thin child, children with severe obesity at 5 years old had almost 20 times the subsequent risk of developing slipped capital femoral epiphysis, a debilitating hip disease, according to a study published online Oct. 22, 2018 in the journal *Pediatrics*. Greater the BMI of the child, greater the risk of slipped capital femoral epiphysis. The study authors recommend that doctors who treat children be aware of slipped capital femoral epiphysis, especially amongst obese children.

A New Diagnostic Test to Aid Determination of Menopausal Status

The US FDA has permitted marketing of the PicoAMH Elisa diagnostic test as an aid in the determination of a patient's menopausal status. The PicoAMH Elisa test measures the amount of anti-Müllerian hormone (AMH) in the blood. AMH levels represent one indicator available to clinicians to determine whether a woman is approaching or is likely to have reached her final menstrual period. The test is meant to be used only in conjunction with other clinical assessments and laboratory findings.

FDA Approves Baloxavir to Treat Acute Uncomplicated Influenza

Xofluza (baloxavir marboxil) has been approved by the US FDA for the treatment of acute uncomplicated influenza (flu) in patients 12 years of age and older who have been symptomatic for no more than 48 hours.

