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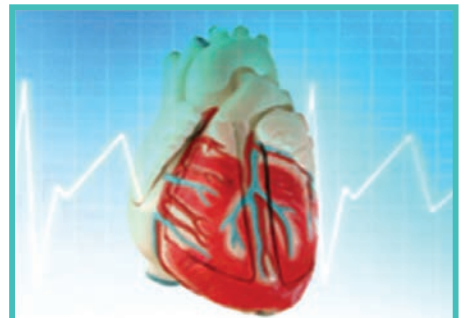
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News and Views

Union Health Minister Chairs High Level Review Meeting on Leprosy and TB

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Shri JP Nadda has directed for a comprehensive strategy for addressing incidence, prevalence and surveillance aspects to eliminate leprosy at the district level. Chairing a high level review meeting on Leprosy and Tuberculosis (TB), the Health Minister also asked the officials to take up new interventions in areas where the prevalence is high and mount aggressive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns to enhance awareness on prevention and control of leprosy in the states, and to destigmatize leprosy. He further said that there is an urgent need for creating awareness in the community and was of the view that 'TB Champions' who survived TB, may be identified to raise awareness about TB in various states... (*Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, April 17, 2018*).

Evening People at Greater Risk of All-cause Mortality

All-cause mortality is 10% higher in people who prefer evenings over mornings 'evening chronotypes', says a study published online April 11, 2018 in the journal *Chronobiology International*. Respiratory, digestive, neurological and/or psychological conditions were more common in these individuals as was diabetes.

New ASCO Guidelines for Metastatic Prostate Cancer

According to new clinical practice guideline from American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) administered along with docetaxel or abiraterone in patients with newly diagnosed metastatic non-castrate prostate cancer is associated with better survival vs. ADT alone. The guidelines are published April 2, 2018 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Study Suggests Tumor Mutational Burden as a New Biomarker for Lung Cancer

The results of a trial published online April 16, 2018 in the *New England Journal of Medicine* show that in patients with advanced non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and a tumor mutational burden of at least 10 mutations per megabase, first-line treatment with nivolumab *plus* ipilimumab was associated with longer progression-free survival than chemotherapy.

Patients with HIV Infection at Risk of PAD

Patients with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection have a 19% increased risk of peripheral artery disease (PAD). These results from the Veterans Aging Cohort Study (VACS) published March 13, 2018 in *Circulation*. Persons with sustained CD4 cell counts <200 cells/mm³, the risk of incident PAD events is nearly doubled. All patients diagnosed with juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) should be screened for uveitis with a current audited protocol, according to consensus-based recommendations from the SHARE (Single Hub and Access point for pediatric Rheumatology in Europe) Initiative published March 28, 2018 in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*.

Mosquito-packed Drones Soon to Join Fight Against Zika and Other Deadly Diseases

Robotics may soon be a critical ally in the fight against disease-spreading bugs, after a successful test releasing sterile mosquitos from aerial drones as part of efforts to suppress the insect that spreads Zika and other diseases. The drone-based mechanism overcomes a critical bottleneck in the application of Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) to control insect pests, said the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which developed the system in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the non-profit group WeRobotics. SIT, a form of insect birth control, uses radiation to sterilize male mosquitos, which are then released to mate with wild females. As these do not produce any offspring, the insect population declines over time. However, to be effective, the technique requires the uniform release of large numbers of insects in good condition over a given area. For instance, *Aedes* mosquitos, responsible for the spread of diseases like dengue or yellow fever, do not disperse for more than 100 meters in their lifetime. They are also fragile, and high-altitude releases by airplanes—often used in the application of SIT for other insects—can damage their wings and legs. The drone-based system overcomes this problem... (*UN, April 19, 2018*)

A Single Concussion may Increase Risk of Parkinson's Disease

A study published April 18, 2018 in *Neurology* says that patients with mild concussion, or mild traumatic brain

injury have a 56% higher risk of developing Parkinson's disease. The study defined mild traumatic brain injury as loss of consciousness for up to 30 minutes, alteration of consciousness of a moment to 24 hours or amnesia for up to 24 hours.

Coffee Safe in Some Patients with Arrhythmias

Many clinicians advise patients with atrial or ventricular arrhythmias to avoid caffeinated beverages, according to a review published April 16, 2018 in *JACC: Clinical Electrophysiology*. Caffeine doses up to 500 mg daily (equivalent to six cups of coffee) did not increase the severity or rate of ventricular arrhythmias. However, patients with a prior heart disease should avoid energy drinks.

Once-daily Triple Therapy with Fluticasone Furoate + Umeclidinium + Vilanterol Reduces COPD Exacerbations

A decline in the frequency of moderate or severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exacerbations along with fewer hospitalizations was observed after once-daily triple therapy with fluticasone furoate (inhaled glucocorticoid) + umeclidinium (long-acting muscarinic receptor antagonist) + vilanterol (long-acting beta-agonists) as compared to dual therapy with fluticasone furoate + vilanterol or umeclidinium + vilanterol. The study is published April 18, 2018 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Study Shows Artificial Pancreas as Effective Treatment for Type 1 Diabetes

A review of published evidence has concluded that as compared with standard treatment, artificial pancreas helps to achieve better glycemic control in patients with type 1 diabetes with 2.5 extra hours of normoglycemia daily and reduced hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia. These findings are published April 18, 2018 in the *BMJ*.

Antipsychotic Drugs Associated with Free Thyroxine Levels

Findings of a study presented April 5, 2018 at the Schizophrenia International Research Society (SIRS) 2018 Biennial Meeting in Florence, Italy show low free thyroxine (FT4) levels with the use of antipsychotic drugs such as olanzapine and quetiapine.

FDA Safety Alert About 24-hour Multipatient Endoscope Connectors

In a safety alert, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has cautioned about the risk of cross-contamination

from 24-hour multi-patient use endoscope connectors that are used without reprocessing. The FDA has advised healthcare providers and facilities to use single-use endoscope connectors with backflow prevention features, or use reusable endoscope connectors with backflow prevention features, and ensure that those reusable connectors are reprocessed according to their instructions for use prior to each patient procedure.

Risk of Stroke Increases with the Number of Cigarettes Smoked

A new study published April 19, 2018 in the journal *Stroke* reports that men younger than 50 years who smoked were 88% more likely to have a stroke compared to men who never smoked. Quitting smoking is the ultimate goal, but risk of stroke can be decreased by reducing the number of cigarettes smoked, say researchers.

Walking Fast Reduces Hospitalizations in Patients with Heart Disease

Walking fast results in fewer hospitalizations for patients with heart disease, according to research presented April 20, 2018 at EuroPrevent 2018, a European Society of Cardiology congress at Ljubljana, Slovenia. Fifty-one percent of slow walkers had at least one hospitalization vs. 44% of the intermediate walkers and 31% of the fast walkers.

Noninvasive Nerve Stimulation may Help with Hand Tremor

Noninvasive peripheral neuromodulation via a wrist-worn neuromodulation device provides symptomatic relief to people with essential tremors in their hands, according to a study to be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 70th Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, April 21 to 27, 2018.

ACIP Recommends Heplisav-B Vaccine to Prevent Hepatitis B Infection

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) says that Heplisav-B (HepB-CpG), a yeast-derived hepatitis B vaccine made with a novel adjuvant may be used as a HepB vaccine in persons aged 18 years and older recommended for vaccination against hepatitis B virus. The vaccine is administered as a 2-dose series (0, 1 month). The recommendations are published online April 19, 2018 in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Recommendations for Screening for Lung Cancer

An expert panel report on screening for lung cancer has suggested annual screening with low-dose CT for

asymptomatic smokers and former smokers age 55-77 who have smoked 30 pack years or more and either continue to smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. This and other recommendations are published in the April 2018 issue of the journal *Chest*.

Cannabidiol Gets Unanimous Votes as Adjunctive Treatment for Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome

A US FDA advisory committee has voted unanimously to support approval of a purified formulation of cannabidiol (Epidiolex, GW Pharmaceuticals) as an adjunctive treatment for Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome in patients 2 years of age or older.

Piperacillin + Tazobactam Inferior to Meropenem in Bloodstream Infections due to Ceftriaxone-resistant *E. coli*

A new research presented April 22, 2018 at the 28th European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) in Madrid, Spain has shown piperacillin + tazobactam to be inferior to meropenem in potentially fatal bloodstream infections caused by ceftriaxone-resistant *Escherichia coli* and *Klebsiella pneumoniae*.

First Test to Identify *Candida auris*

The US FDA has permitted marketing for a new use of the BRUKER MALDI Biotyper CA system as the first test to identify the emerging pathogen *Candida auris*, which can cause serious infections in hospitalized patients.

Screening as per Limited Criteria of Weight and Age Misses out on 50% of Patients with Diabetes

About half of adults with diabetes and prediabetes would be missed out as a result of targeted screening for diabetes only with age- and weight-based criteria as recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), says a published online April 12, 2018 in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. Inclusion of other risk factors in screening improves detection of such cases.

Very Resistant Case of Gonorrhoea Successfully Treated with Ertapenem

The very resistant case of gonorrhoea from the UK has been successfully treated with a 3-day course of intravenous ertapenem. The gonorrhoea strain was highly resistant to the dual first-line antibiotics azithromycin and ceftriaxone.

High Risk of Multidrug-resistant Infections with Multi-use Thermometers

The use of multi-patient axial thermometers increases risk of multidrug-resistant hospital infections as per findings of a study presented at the annual meeting of the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases in Madrid, Spain. The outbreak of multidrug-resistant *Candida auris* in a hospital neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) was found to be due to the use of multi-use thermometers.

Seventy Million People to be Vaccinated as Part of Vaccination Week in the Americas

More than 70 million people will be vaccinated against a variety of dangerous vaccine-preventable diseases during the 16th Annual Vaccination Week in the Americas - 10 million more than in 2017. Coordinated by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the campaign, which has taken place each year since 2003 and will be celebrated this year from 21 to 28 April, aims to promote the vital role of vaccination in saving lives.

The slogan for this year's campaign is "Strengthen your defense! #GetVax #VaccinesWork." It was chosen in honor of the 2018 Soccer World Cup and seeks to encourage the population in general, and particularly those planning a trip abroad, to get vaccinated in order to strengthen their immune systems and avoid disease.

As part of the Vaccination Week in the Americas celebrations, 11 countries have announced their intention to strengthen measles immunization through the vaccination of 6 million people. The endemic measles virus was eliminated in the Americas but continues to circulate in other parts of the world. However, in 2017, almost 900 new cases were registered in 4 countries of the region, and during the first few months of this year, 380 new cases were registered in 11 countries...(PAHO/WHO, April 19, 2018).

Fewer Women Receive High-intensity Statin

According to a study published April 16, 2018 in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, fewer than half of women who filled a statin prescription following a heart attack received a high-intensity statin suggesting that they continue to be less likely than men to be prescribed this lifesaving treatment.

Immune Response of the Patient may Prevent Heart Failure

Patients' own immune response has the potential to prevent the development and progression of heart

failure, according to research presented April 22, 2018 at *Frontiers in Cardiovascular Biology (FCVB) 2018*, a European Society of Cardiology Congress in Vienna, Austria.

AAP Releases Clinical Report on DNAR Orders Before Anesthesia and Surgery

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that hospitals formally address the extent to which Do-Not-Attempt-Resuscitation (DNAR) orders apply in the operating room, according to a new clinical report to be published in the May 2018 *Pediatrics*. Hospitals should re-evaluate of DNAR orders before surgery to help the family decide whether to honor it in the operating room.

Patients on Hemodialysis at Higher Risk of Falls and Altered Mental Status with Opioids

Opioid pain medications may not be as safe for hemodialysis patients and hence their use should be limited when possible, says a study published online April 19, 2018 in the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*. Opioids increase the risk for altered mental status, fall and fracture in a dose-dependent manner in these patients.

24-hour BP Monitoring Better Predicts Mortality than BP Measurement in Clinic

Ambulatory blood pressure (BP) measurement is a stronger predictor of all-cause and cardiovascular mortality than clinic BP measurements, says a study reported online April 19, 2018 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Masked hypertension was more strongly associated with all-cause mortality than sustained hypertension or white-coat hypertension.

Urgent ERCP not Superior to Early ERCP in Biliary Pancreatitis without Cholangitis

Urgent endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) done within 24 hours is not superior to early ERCP done between 24 and 72 hours in patients with acute biliary pancreatitis with biliary obstruction without cholangitis. In the study published online February 5, 2018 in *PLoS One*, no clinical difference between the two groups vs. 24-72 hours in terms of ERCP-related complications or total duration of hospitalization.

AAP Recommends Limiting Screen Time for Young Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends parents develop healthy media habits for

their families i.e., very limited screen time for young children, who learn best from people, not screens. In "Retro Toddler: More Than 100 Old-School Activities to Boost Development", Anne H. Zachry, PhD, OTR/L helps parents understand the importance of engaging with their toddlers (ages 12-36 months) to enhance language, motor and social skills without the distractions of TV, You Tube and noisy electronics.

People with Normal Weight, but Central Obesity at Greater Risk of Heart Disease

Findings of a study presented April 20, 2018 at EuroPrevent 2018, a European Society of Cardiology congress in Ljubljana, Slovenia show that belly fat, even in people who are not otherwise overweight, is bad for the heart. Participants with a normal BMI (18.5-24.9 kg/m²) and central obesity had an approximately two-fold higher long-term risk of major adverse cardiovascular event (MACE) compared to participants without central obesity.

AAN Guideline Recommends Starting MS Drugs as Early as Possible

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) has issued a new guideline on the treatment of multiple sclerosis (MS), which says that drugs to treat MS must be started as early as possible on rather than letting the disease run its course. This is because the disease is known to get worse over time. The guideline is published in the April 23, 2018 online issue of *Neurology*.

Postpartum Care should be an Ongoing Process, Says ACOG

A revised Committee Opinion from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) on April 23, 2018 re-emphasizes the importance of the "fourth trimester". ACOG has also recommended that postpartum care should be an ongoing process, rather than a single encounter and that all women have contact with their ob-gyns or other obstetric care providers within the first 3 weeks postpartum.

Suspect Acute Aortic Dissection with Pulse or Neurologic Deficit and Hypotension

A systematic review and meta-analysis published in the April 2018 issue of *Academic Emergency Medicine* suggests that presence of hypotension, pulse or neurologic deficit - findings that have a high specificity and high positive likelihood ratio - should raise the suspicion for acute aortic dissection.

Surgical Resection After Neoadjuvant Therapy Improves Survival in Localized Pancreatic Cancer

In highly selected patients with locally advanced pancreatic cancer, surgical resection after neoadjuvant therapy is feasible and associated with longer overall survival as reported in *Annals of Surgery*, online March 28, 2018.

Study Identifies 17 New Gene Variants Associated with Depression

A genome-wide association study published online April 16, 2018 in *Nature Communications* of three depression phenotypes in UK Biobank has identified 17 independent loci that are significantly associated across the three phenotypes of broad depression, probable major depressive disorder (MDD), and International Classification of Diseases (ICD, version 9 or 10)-coded MDD.

Ticagrelor + Aspirin Increases Saphenous Vein Graft Patency

According to a randomized trial reported online April 24, 2018 in *JAMA*, in patients undergoing elective coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) with saphenous vein grafting, ticagrelor + aspirin significantly increased graft patency after 1 year vs. aspirin alone.

Increased Physical Activity Both Before and After Treatment Improves Survival in Cancer Patients

Cancer patients who are physically active both before and after treatment are 40% more likely to survive compared to those who are sedentary, according to new findings presented April 18, 2018 at the recent American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) 2018 Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Erenumab Effectively Prevents Episodic Migraine

Results of a study presented April 24, 2018 at the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) 2018 Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, California show the beneficial effect of erenumab in preventing episodic migraine in whom previous treatments have failed. Erenumab inhibits the calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) receptor, which transmits migraine pain signals.

Vein

High serum levels of fibrinogen are associated with greater risk of developing end-stage renal disease (ESRD) in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and diabetic nephropathy. These conclusions of a study

were published online April 20, 2018 in the journal *Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice*.

Previous Silent MI Associated with Poor Prognosis in Patients Presenting with First Acute MI

A study reported online April 18, 2018 in *JACC Cardiovascular Imaging* found evidence of silent myocardial infarction (MI) in around 9% of 392 patients presenting with their first acute MI with the use of late gadolinium enhancement (LGE) cardiac magnetic resonance (CMR) imaging. It was also associated with poor prognosis.

US FDA Approves Expanded Indication for Trelegy Ellipta in COPD

The US FDA has approved an expanded indication for GlaxoSmithKline's single inhaler triple therapy Trelegy Ellipta (fluticasone furoate/umeclidinium/vilanterol) to include patients with chronic bronchitis and/or emphysema who are on a fixed-dose combination of fluticasone furoate and vilanterol for airflow obstruction and reducing exacerbations in whom additional treatment of airflow obstruction is desired or for patients who are already receiving umeclidinium and a fixed-dose combination of fluticasone furoate and vilanterol.

More Than Half of Patients with Heart Disease Continue Smoking After Hospitalization

Results of the EUROASPIRE V survey presented April 20, 2018 at EuroPrevent 2018, a European Society of Cardiology Congress in Ljubljana, Slovenia show that more than half (55%) of the patients who were smokers before hospitalisation were still smoking 1 year after their heart attack.

Brain Structure Linked to Symptoms of Restless Legs Syndrome

People with restless legs syndrome had a 7.5% decrease in the average thickness of brain tissue in the somatosensory cortex that processes sensory information, according to a study published in the April 25, 2018 online issue of *Neurology*.

Girls with Type 2 Diabetes at High Risk of Menstrual Irregularities

Secondary analysis of data from the Treatment Options for Type 2 Diabetes in Youth (TODAY) study shows that girls diagnosed with type 2 diabetes have a high frequency of menstrual irregularities, according to a new study published April 24, 2018 in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.