

Snippets

Snippets from the worldwide web

Sri Lanka Journal of Child Health, 2010; **39**: 62-63

Maternal Antiretroviral Use Not Tied to Congenital Abnormalities

In women with HIV, antiretroviral therapy during pregnancy does not seem to cause congenital abnormalities, a Latin American study suggests. "The overall prevalence of congenital abnormalities in our study population is within the range reported among the general population in Latin America," the researchers point out. Stillbirths, too, were no more common with antiretroviral therapy.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716059?src=mp&spon=1&uac=60307BR>

The Effect of Backpacks on the Lumbar Spine in Children: A Standing MRI Study

Backpack loads are responsible for a significant amount of back pain in children, which in part, may be due to changes in lumbar disc height or curvature. This is the first upright MRI study to document reduced disc height and greater lumbar asymmetry for common backpack loads in children.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/715981?src=mp&spon=9&uac=60307BR>

Study Linking Autism to Vaccine Retracted

The venerable British medical journal *The Lancet* has retracted a 1998 study suggesting a link between autism and childhood vaccination with the measles-mumps-rubella MMR vaccine. *The Lancet* tells WebMD that it has retracted "10 or 15" studies in its 186-year history. The retraction follows the finding of the U.K. General Medical Council (GMC) that says study leader Andrew Wakefield, MD, and two colleagues acted "dishonestly" and "irresponsibly" in conducting their research.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716322?src=mp&spon=9&uac=60307BR>

Chorioamnionitis During Pregnancy Linked to Increased Risk for Childhood Asthma

Fetal exposure to chorioamnionitis combined with preterm delivery is associated with an increased risk for physician-diagnosed asthma at 8 years of age or younger, according to the results of a large retrospective cohort study published in the

February issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716327?src=mp&spon=9&uac=60307BR>

Biochemical Marker of Bronchiolitis Severity Identified

The concentration of lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) in nasal wash specimens of young children with bronchiolitis is a significant independent predictor of illness severity, clinicians report in the February issue of *Pediatrics*

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716360?src=mp&spon=9&uac=60307BR>

Rates of Empyema in Pediatric Pneumonia Are Increasing

While rates of childhood pneumonia have fallen in the U.S., the paediatric pneumonia that does occur is more often complicated by empyema, investigators report. Routine vaccination of infants with the 7-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV7) began in 2000, but even before then, regional studies were showing that pneumonia-associated empyema was on the rise in children, the researchers say.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716941>

Older Maternal Age Linked to Increased Risk for Autism in Children

Advanced maternal age significantly increases the risk of having a child with autism irrespective of paternal age, a large population-based study suggests. The research, conducted by investigators at UC Davis Health System, Sacramento, California, shows that the incremental risk of having a child with autism increased by 18% for every 5-year increase in maternal age.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/716878>

Treatments for HIV/TB Co-Infection Should Start at the Same Time: Study

In patients with HIV and tuberculosis (TB) whose CD4 cell counts are below 500/mm³, mortality is increased if antiretroviral therapy is delayed until TB treatment is finished, according to research

from South Africa. TB is the most common opportunistic infection and the most frequent cause of death in HIV-infected patients in developing countries, the authors say. In South Africa, nearly three-quarters of TB patients are co-infected with HIV. But clinicians often hesitate to treat both diseases at the same time, because of potential drug interactions or overlapping side effects, the immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome, high pill burden, and "programmatic challenges."

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717560>

Budesonide Improves Pulmonary Outcomes in Preterm Infants

Preterm newborns who received intratracheal budesonide via surfactant had significantly better pulmonary outcomes, and now researchers report there were no long-term adverse effects of the treatment.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717456>

Day 1 Hyperglycaemia Linked to Death, Brain Damage in Extremely Preterm Infants

In extremely preterm infants, hyperglycaemia on the first day of life more than triples the risk of death and brain damage, according to a report in the March issue of Pediatrics.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717533>

Ethosuximide May Be Best Choice for Childhood Absence Seizures

A new double-blind study that compared ethosuximide, a drug that dates back to the 1950s, with valproic acid and lamotrigine finds that ethosuximide may be the treatment of choice for children with absence seizures.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717916>

Step-Up Therapy Improves Asthma Control in Children

Children with asthma who continue to have symptoms while using low-dose inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) can benefit from "stepping up" treatment by increasing the dosage or adding either a long-acting beta agonist (LABA) or a leukotriene-receptor antagonist (LTRA), according to a new triple-crossover randomized study called BADGER (Best Add-On Therapy Giving Effective Responses).

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717911>

Serotype 19A Often the Culprit in Invasive Pneumococcal Infections in Kids

Serotype 19A is most often to blame for invasive pneumococcal infections in children, and frequently the isolate is resistant to multiple drugs, researchers report in the March issue of Pediatrics.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717795>

Montelukast Cuts Recurrent Wheezing With RSV Bronchiolitis

Montelukast, a leukotriene receptor antagonist, can help prevent recurrent wheezing episodes after respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) bronchiolitis, new research shows. From earlier work, the researchers knew that airway levels of cysteinyl leukotriene correlated with eosinophil numbers in RSV bronchiolitis. The goal of the present study was to see if reduction of leukotriene levels with montelukast might reduce eosinophil degranulation, which in turn would help reduce recurrent wheezing.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/717603?src=mp&spon=13&uac=60307BR>

B J C Perera
Joint Editor