

Snippets

Snippets from the worldwide web

Sri Lanka Journal of Child Health, 2012; 41(4):

Sports Drinks, Not Just Sodas, Drive Up Weight in Teens

Data on nearly 11,000 offspring of participants in the Nurses' Health Study II, aged 9 to 15 years, were tracked over time at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. At the end of each 2-year interval of the study, the teens had gained almost 2.0 pounds for each can of soda they drank every day. If they drank 2 sodas a day, they gained 4.0 pounds over each 2-year interval. Importantly, this study revealed the previously unknown consequence of drinking sports drinks; the teens gained an average of 3.5 pounds for every sports drink consumed per day.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/771496>

New Form of Autism May Be Treatable With Supplement

A homozygous mutation that silences the gene involved in the metabolism of branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) has been identified in a group of children who have autism and either epilepsy or abnormalities on electroencephalogram (EEG), an international team of investigators has reported. They identified a mutation in the branched-chain ketoacid dehydrogenase kinase (BCKDK) gene in families among whom parents were cousins and whose children had autism, epilepsy, and intellectual disability. In mice, the researchers were able to show that a BCAA-enriched diet abolished the neurologic deficits within a week. The study was published online September 6 in *Science*.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/771886>

Probiotics During Pregnancy May Ward off Eczema

Babies were less likely to develop eczema when their mothers took probiotics during pregnancy and while breastfeeding, in a new study from Finland. Researchers said it's possible that probiotics may influence babies' health through immune cells that cross the placenta and later are passed in breast milk.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/773357>

Probiotic Improves Colic in Breastfed Infants

The probiotic *Lactobacillus reuteri* DSM 17938 improves colic in infants who are exclusively or predominantly breastfed, a new study shows. A number of therapies for colic have been tried (modified formulas, herbal teas, music, and the like), but none so far has been proven conclusively to be effective. Significantly more infants in the probiotic group than in the placebo group experienced treatment success (a reduction in the daily average crying time of at least 50%) beginning at day 7 and continuing throughout the 28-day study.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/771583>

Haemophilia: Contact Sports Pose Little Risk

Vigorous physical activity in 4- to 18-year-old boys with moderate or severe haemophilia appears to be associated with a transiently increased risk for bleeding, although the absolute risk is low and prophylactic treatment can help reduce it further, according to new research.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/772326>

Common Solvents Tied to Birth Defects

Pregnant women with frequent exposure to solvents at work may be at higher risk of having babies with birth defects, French researchers say. Both self-reported exposure and urine samples supported the link between the chemicals and malformations such as cleft palate and limb deformities, they reported September 21st in *Epidemiology*. Specifically, urine breakdown products pointed to bleach-containing solvents and glycol ethers - a group of solvents common in paints, cleaning products and cosmetics - as potential culprits. Concentrated fumes from both types of chemicals are toxic to humans, and glycol ethers in particular cause birth defects and developmental problems in animals. A U.S. study published earlier this year also found a link between occupational exposure to solvents during pregnancy and several kinds of congenital heart defects.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/772070>

Eczema in Infancy Predicts Hay Fever in Childhood

Eczema in infancy predicted hay fever in childhood in a recent study, especially in children with asthma, but the relationship between infantile eczema and asthma without hay fever was less clear. "Childhood eczema needs to be taken seriously," said the researcher Dr. John L. Hopper "Anecdotal evidence suggests that it does not receive much attention as it does not have a similar impact to asthma and other childhood chronic diseases. However, our work shows that eczema has long term consequences."

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/772486>

Caffeine Therapy Improves Outcomes in Premature Infants

Caffeine therapy initiated for prevention of apnoea of prematurity shortly after birth reduces gross motor function impairment and, in infants who are small for gestational age (SGA), improves many hospital-related outcomes, new research suggests. Here at the 2012 American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference and Exhibition, Barbara Schmidt, MD, principal investigator of the Caffeine for Apnoea of Prematurity (CAP) study, presented 5-year follow-up results. Other investigators reported new information on its benefits in SGA premature infants.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/773010>

Early Glutamine Supplementation Yields Long-Lasting Benefits in Premies

Premature babies derive long-term benefits from glutamine supplementation in the first month of life, according to follow-up data from a controlled trial. Compared with placebo, early glutamine supplementation was associated with larger brain volumes at age eight, Jorrit F. de Kievert from VU

University, Amsterdam and colleagues reported today in Pediatrics. They say these volume differences were strongly related to differences between the glutamine and placebo group in the number of serious neonatal infections, which were far less common in the glutamine group (odds ratio 0.32; p=0.008).

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/772630>

Infantile Haemangioma: Propranolol More Effective Than Corticosteroids?

Propranolol might be more effective than corticosteroids for the treatment of infantile cutaneous haemangiomas, according to a systematic review and meta-analysis presented here at the Plastic Surgery 2012: American Society of Plastic Surgeons Annual Meeting. "Propranolol was associated with greater efficacy than steroids after either systemic or local administration," reported Ali Izadpanah, MD, from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Corticosteroids were also associated with double the rate of adverse effects, compared with propranolol, he added.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/773457>

Treat Kids With Sore Throats to Curb Rheumatic Fever in South Africa

A strategy of treating all children in developing countries who present with a sore throat with a one-off injection of penicillin to prevent development of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in a minority would be cost-effective and save lives, a new statistical analysis shows.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/773887>

B J C Perera
Joint Editor

A CORDIAL REQUEST TO THE READERSHIP

Please be kind enough to take a minute or two to write or e-mail us and let us know how useful this feature of "Snippets from the Web" is. The e-mails should be sent to either <drgnlucas@gmail.com> or <bjcp@ymail.com>.

On our review of the number of "hits" to the separate sections, this particular segment does not seem to be very popular and does not seem to attract much of the readership.

We need a feed-back from the readership to enable us to make a decision as to whether continuation of this feature could be justified.

Thank you.

Joint Editors, SLJCH