



This Week in the Journal

MARCH 17, 2005

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1148 Ablation for Atrial Fibrillation in Congestive Heart Failure
- 1150 The "Pill-in-the-Pocket" Approach to Atrial Fibrillation
- 1151 Vascular Events after Acute Infection or Vaccination
- 1153 Altered Nuclear Transfer
- 1154 Medical Discoveries and Scientific Priority
- 1154 Acute Pericarditis
- 1155 H₁-Antihistamines
- 1157 Leflunomide for Polyomavirus Type BK Nephropathy

BOOK REVIEWS

- 1159 The Status Syndrome: How Social Standing Affects Our Health and Longevity
- 1160 Critical Condition: How Health Care in America Became Big Business — and Bad Medicine
- 1161 The Last Well Person: How to Stay Well Despite the Health-Care System
- 1162 The Eicosanoids

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

- 1165 Cardiovascular Risk Associated with Celecoxib in a Clinical Trial for Colorectal Adenoma Prevention
- 1166 The Serotonin Syndrome
- 1167 Transmission of Rabies Virus from an Organ Donor to Four Transplant Recipients

Next Week in the Journal

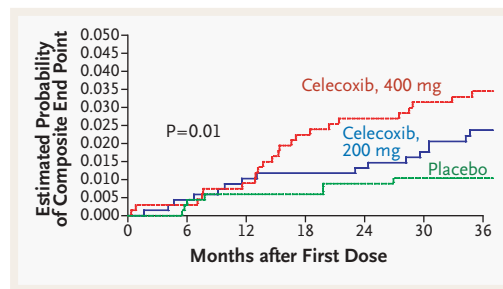
MARCH 24, 2005

Uncompensated Care

Joel Weissman

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Cardiovascular Risk Associated with Celecoxib



Using data from a clinical trial of celecoxib to prevent colorectal adenomas, these investigators analyzed cardiovascular events over a three-year follow-up period. There was a dose-related increase in the risk of a composite outcome of death

from cardiovascular causes, myocardial infarction, stroke, or heart failure. The hazard ratio was 2.3 with a 200-mg dose and 3.4 with a 400-mg dose. These results raise concern that the use of celecoxib is associated with a serious risk of cardiovascular events.

SEE P. 1071; EDITORIALS, P. 1131 AND P. 1133; CME, P. 1165

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

COX-2 Inhibition and Cardiovascular Risk after CABG Surgery

When administered to patients for pain control after coronary-artery bypass surgery, valdecoxib and its intravenous prodrug, parecoxib, were found to be associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular thromboembolic events. These findings add to the growing concern that the use of COX-2 inhibitors increases the risk of cardiovascular events, particularly in persons who are at risk for such events.

SEE P. 1081; EDITORIALS, P. 1131 AND P. 1133

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Cardiovascular Events Associated with Rofecoxib

In a clinical trial of chemoprevention for colorectal adenomas, the use of rofecoxib was found to be associated with a significantly increased risk of cardiovascular events, primarily myocardial infarctions and ischemic cerebrovascular events. Although rofecoxib has been removed from the market by the manufacturer, these data need to be carefully considered in making decisions about any future use of rofecoxib.

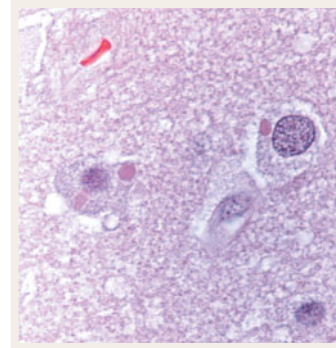
SEE P. 1092; EDITORIALS, P. 1131 AND P. 1133

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Transmission of Rabies by Organ Transplantation

Neurologic deterioration followed by fatal encephalitis occurred in four patients who had received kidneys, liver, and an artery segment from the same donor. Multiple studies showed evidence of rabies virus in both central nervous system tissues from the four recipients and nerve tissue in the transplanted organs. The donor was thought to have been well before a subarachnoid hemorrhage. It was later learned that he had told friends of being bitten by a bat.

SEE P. 1103; CME, P. 1167



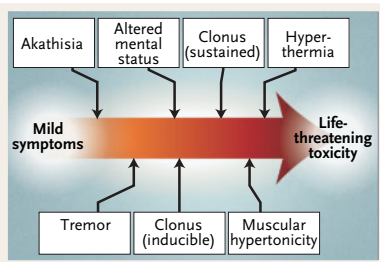
CURRENT CONCEPTS

The Serotonin Syndrome

The serotonin syndrome is a potentially life-threatening drug reaction that may result from therapeutic medication use, self-poisoning, or interactions between drugs.

This review explains the clinical presentations that should lead to the diagnosis, the mechanisms of toxicity, and the drugs and interactions most often implicated. Clinical management includes measures to control agitation, autonomic instability, and hyperthermia.

SEE P. 1112; CME, P. 1166



CASE RECORDS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

A Boy with Pain in the Right Thigh

A 10-year-old boy had pain in the right thigh that interfered with activities, awoke him at night, and was only slightly relieved by acetaminophen. Magnetic resonance imaging and radionuclide bone scans showed a large area of abnormality within the femur. Computed tomography-guided (CT) biopsy was not completed because of the patient's agitation, but CT images showed a small lytic lesion in the cortex surrounded by dense bone. A diagnostic and therapeutic procedure was performed.

SEE P. 1122

SPECIAL REPORT

A Potential Decline in Life Expectancy in the United States

For the past 100 years or so, there has been a general trend toward increasing life expectancy in developed countries. In this Special Report, the authors argue that obesity, and perhaps infectious diseases, will lead to a decrease in life expectancy in the 21st century.

SEE P. 1138; EDITORIAL, P. 1135

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BASIC RESEARCH

Regulating Gene Expression

Achieving appropriate levels of gene expression at the right time and the right place is an important goal of gene therapy. A new study shows one way to meet this goal.

SEE P. 1146