

THIS WEEK in the JOURNAL

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

MRI Evaluation of the Contralateral Breast in Women with Recently Diagnosed Breast Cancer

Up to 10% of women with a diagnosis of unilateral breast cancer have cancer in the contralateral breast, despite negative clinical and mammographic examinations. This study investigated the use of MRI examination of the contralateral breast in women with a diagnosis of unilateral breast cancer and negative clinical and mammographic examinations. MRI detected occult cancer in the contralateral breast in about 3% of these women. All of the cancers were early stage, without evidence of spread to the lymph nodes or beyond.

SEE P. 1295; EDITORIAL, P. 1362; CME, P. 1391

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Effect of Torcetrapib on the Progression of Coronary Atherosclerosis

In this 24-month clinical trial, torcetrapib, a cholesteryl ester transfer protein inhibitor, failed to cause regression of coronary atherosclerosis, as seen on intravascular ultrasonography, even though levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol were markedly elevated. The drug was also associated with an elevation in blood pressure, and the entire torcetrapib research program has been suspended.

SEE P. 1304; EDITORIAL, P. 1364

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Mutant Telomerase in Familial Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis

Mutations affecting both components of the telomerase enzyme, hTERT and hTR, are associated with familial idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, and carriers of such mutations have shorter telomeres than do noncarrier family members. This finding suggests that the disease may be triggered by a loss of alveolar cells, the progenitors of which may be limited by short telomeres.

SEE P. 1317

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Bronchial Thermoplasty in Asthma

Asthmatic exacerbations result in part from constriction of airway smooth muscle. In this controlled trial, the use of bronchoscopically delivered thermoplasty to reduce the mass of airway smooth muscle resulted in fewer exacerbations among subjects with moderate or severe asthma. The incidence of adverse events was

higher among subjects undergoing bronchial thermoplasty than among control subjects during the first 3 weeks after treatment.

SEE P. 1327; EDITORIAL, P. 1367

CLINICAL THERAPEUTICS

Varicella–Zoster Vaccine for the Prevention of Herpes Zoster

A 64-year-old man in good general health presents to his internist for a routine examination. In a large clinical trial, the varicella–zoster vaccine reduced the incidence of herpes zoster by 51% and the incidence of postherpetic neuralgia by 67%. Should he receive this vaccine?

SEE P. 1338; CME, P. 1389

CURRENT CONCEPTS

Withdrawal of Albuterol Inhalers Containing Chlorofluorocarbon Propellants

The Montreal Protocol requires limitation of the use of devices powered by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which reduce stratospheric ozone levels. Albuterol, a medication commonly used for the treatment of asthma that is delivered by metered-dose inhalers with CFCs as propellants, will be withdrawn from the U.S. market by December 2008. This review article summarizes useful information about albuterol in metered-dose inhalers with non-CFC propellants and discusses associated economic issues.

SEE P. 1344; CME, P. 1390

CASE RECORDS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

A 55-Year-Old Man Impaled in a Rowing Accident

A 55-year-old man was sculling when his boat collided with an eight-person shell; the prow of the larger boat entered his lower back and exited through his abdomen, throwing him into the water. He was taken to this hospital, where the trauma surgery team took over his care. Members of the team discuss the problems of traumatic abdominal and orthopedic injuries and the role of trauma systems.

SEE P. 1353

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BASIC RESEARCH

Parsing Pulmonary Fibrosis

The signaling molecule caveolin-1 provides protection against pulmonary fibrosis in a mouse model and counters the profibrotic effects of transforming growth factor $\beta 1$ (TGF- $\beta 1$). That TGF- $\beta 1$ negatively affects telomeres is consistent with the association between mutant telomerase and familial idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis reported elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal* (pages 1317–26).

SEE P. 1370