

# THIS WEEK in the JOURNAL

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Simvastatin with or without Ezetimibe in Familial Hypercholesterolemia

In a 2-year clinical trial, the addition of ezetimibe to simvastatin had no effect on the progression of atherosclerosis, as measured by carotid-artery intima-media thickness, despite the additional lowering of levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol and C-reactive protein by ezetimibe when added to simvastatin. However, the study was not powered to assess clinical end points.

SEE P. 1431; EDITORIALS, P. 1504 AND 1507; CME, P. 1533

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Health Care and Obesity during Pregnancy

Among pregnant women in a large U.S. group-practice health maintenance organization, overweight and obese women had a significantly longer mean length of hospital stay and higher rates of prenatal testing, medications dispensed from the outpatient pharmacy, telephone calls, and prenatal visits than did women with a normal BMI. Most of the increase in length of stay was related to increased rates of cesarean deliveries and obesity-related high-risk conditions.

SEE P. 1444

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Gene for the cblD Defect of Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Metabolism

The genetic basis of a defect in the metabolism of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> (the cblD defect) was studied in cultured skin fibroblasts from seven patients with the defect. The defect was localized to chromosome 2q23.2, and a candidate gene (designated *MMADHC*) was identified in this region. Mutations in *MMADHC* were found in all seven patients. Transfection of the gene into fibroblasts from patients rescued the affected metabolic pathways.

SEE P. 1454

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Treatment of Vulvar Intraepithelial Neoplasia with Topical Imiquimod

The efficacy of local treatment of vulvar intraepithelial neoplasia with imiquimod, an immune-response modifier, was tested in a double-blind, randomized trial. As compared with placebo, imiquimod cream was effective in reducing or eliminating the lesion, relieving symptoms, and clearing the lesion of human papillomavirus.

SEE P. 1465

1430

## CLINICAL PRACTICE

### Osteoporosis in Men

A 65-year-old asymptomatic man is concerned about his risk of osteoporosis. His mother died after a hip fracture at 74 years of age. The patient has no history of fractures but has lost 3 inches in height; he does not smoke and has never taken corticosteroids. He drinks two glasses of beer per day. His body-mass index is 25. Measurements of bone mineral density are consistent with osteoporosis. What should you recommend?

SEE P. 1474

## MECHANISMS OF DISEASE

### Atopic Dermatitis

This comprehensive account of the genetic and environmental factors that cause atopic dermatitis reconciles two hypotheses concerning the origin of the disease — IgE-mediated sensitization, or an intrinsic defect in epithelial cells that causes dysfunction of the skin barrier — with evidence that both mechanisms contribute. Clinical implications are discussed.

SEE P. 1483; CME, P. 1535

## CLINICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING

### An Unintended Consequence

A 79-year-old man with a 5-month history of fatigue and 20-lb (9-kg) weight loss presented to his local physician. The patient also reported intermittent episodes of high temperature, night sweats, and chills.

SEE P. 1496; CME, P. 1534

## SOUNDING BOARD

### Options for Slowing the Growth of Health Care Costs

The authors review potential strategies to contain health care costs and assess each proposal's potential for success. Modifications in reimbursement to reward the practice of evidence-based medicine, expansion of the use of electronic medical records, and standardization of billing transactions to reduce administrative costs are among the strategies they view as most promising.

SEE P. 1509

## VIDEOS IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

### Female Urethral Catheterization



Female urethral catheterization, the insertion of a catheter through the urethra into the urinary bladder to permit drainage, is a fundamental skill for the practicing health care professional. This video covers the indications, current methods, and potential complications.

SEE P. e15