

WESLEY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT THE QUEAS-E UPDATE

(Quality, Uniformity, Education, Attitude, and Service - in Emergencies)

Issue 75

August 2009

New Stuff

"Traditional risk factors are not helpful to diagnose AMI in the ER"

A study of almost 800 patients presenting to the ER with "chest pain" over the age of 25 revealed that smoking, HTN, elevated cholesterol or lipids, a positive family history for heart attack and even diabetes did not predict either independently or in combination the outcome of AMI.

Resuscitation 79(1); 41; October 2008

"Evidence-based medicine is often without evidence"

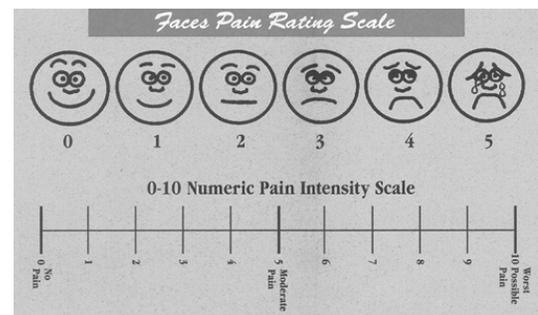
Because much of EBM is really just a consensus panel of "expert opinion" with a large absence of good IA data, there is really no evidence that EBM performs better than traditional medical approaches.

Emerg Med J 25(12); 841; December 2008

"Intranasal fentanyl for pediatric pain control"

A study of 617 children whose age averaged 6-10 years old compared IV morphine to intranasal fentanyl for acute painful conditions. The initial dose of fentanyl was 1.5 micrograms/kg with additional dose required in 44% of fentanyl treated children. The time of onset of analgesia was approximately 30 minutes faster with intranasal fentanyl compared to IV morphine. Ultimately an IV was needed in only 42% of fentanyl treated children.

Emerg Med Australasia 20(6); 515; December 2008



"Plain x-ray fails to find most cases of pneumomediastinum in trauma"

Pneumomediastinum in patients with blunt trauma is often benign - but can be quite serious. In a retrospective study of 136 patients, plain film found only 15% and 100% were found on CT. Consider a CT chest IV contrast instead of plain film for the stable trauma patient with thoracic pain.

J Trauma 65; 1340; December 2008

New Stuff (cont'd)

"Glycoprotein IIb/IIIa inhibitors not helpful and even harmful to give in ER for NSTEMI"

Integrelin is a popular drug heavily promoted especially for NSTEMI. A study of almost 9,500 patients with UA/NSTEMI revealed that patients given Integrilin for 12 hours before angiography was not superior to patients who did not get Integrilin but there was an increased risk of bleeding and transfusion.

NEJM 360; 21; May 21, 2009: 2176-90

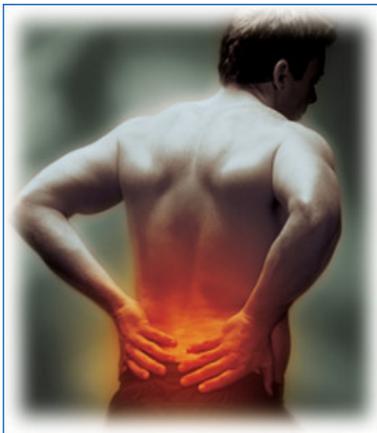
"ACEP policy on pain management"

Emergency department patients should receive expeditious pain management, avoiding delays such as those related to diagnostic testing or consultation.

"MRI for back pain"

Limiting MRI of the low back to a work-up only for either "cauda equina syndromes" (eg epidural compression syndromes) or possible spinal infection greatly saves health care dollars and is not associated with worse outcomes.

Ann Intern Med 2007; 147(7): 478-91



2003

- 1) Family history of "heart attack" or "heart problems at an early age" has little if any prognostic value for chest pain patients.

ACC.org clinical guidelines

- 2) Even with insufflators, seasoned community pediatricians are wrong on the diagnosis of otitis media around 50% of the time.
- 3) There is no difference between running tap water and sterile normal saline in healthy people with lacerations (except cost).

Ped Emerg Care May 2003

- 4) Antibiotics do not help brown recluse spider bites.

NEJM 1999; January 14: 138-9

- 5) Order Hgb instead of H&H. Order troponin only without CKMB - and save the patient from doubling the charge without improving information.
- 6) Smoking does ten times more damage to the US health care system than a hundred "drug-seekers" - but the path to quitting must start with empathy.
- 7) NEXUS protocol is a screening tool that is reported to be 99.9% sensitive in a study of around 35,000 patients! The "C-spine 5" are: 1) no midline neck tenderness; 2) no radiculopathy; 3) no mental status change; 4) no drugs or alcohol (clinically); 5) no significant distracting injury.

2004

- 8) The GI cocktail should not be used as a medical Ouija board. Neither is it any better than plain Mylanta.

J Emerg Med 25; 3 239-44: 2003

- 9) Distal tuft fractures do not require prophylactic antibiotics in healthy people.

J Hand Surg 2003; 28B(5): 388

- 10) Rocephin 125mg IM instead of Cipro po for GC due to resistance to quinolones.

MMWR 2004; 53: 335

- 11) Pediatric community acquired pneumonia is fairly rare in immunized children and is usually overcalled.

Scand J Prim Health Care 2003; 21: 52-5

- 12) To help determine cause of diplopia, try to find out if it is monocular or binocular, and then unilateral or bilateral monocular.

Hospital Physician March 2004: 16-25



- 13) One should interview the adolescent alone.

- 14) Automated BP cuffs often give wrong readings in patients with A-fib.

- 15) The 5 year mortality rate for CHF is 50%, worse than most cancers.

- 16) Statins may improve survival in some conditions from 88.5% to 91.8%. The makers will spin this small difference to say that it reduces mortality by 30%.

- 17) 1 out of 6 physicians will be in a lawsuit this next year. The only significant predictor of payment was the degree of disability NOT the presence of an adverse event due to negligence.

ama-assn.org

- 18) 6 out of 8 AHA panel members who gave IV-tPA a level IA status (after a small controversial study was published) were found to have financial connections with Genetech, the makers of IV-tPA.

BMJ 2002; 324: 723-9

2005

- 19) There is an association between thunderstorms and asthma visits to the ER. Some have speculated that this is due to fungal spores which double during thunderstorms.

Chest 2004; 123 (March): 745-50

- 20) Zanafel is an OTC medication that can remove urushiol (the oil resin in poison ivy/oak) after exposure.

Ann Emerg Med 2003; 42: 51

- 21) Decadron 10mg IV 20 minutes before antibiotics in bacterial meningitis in adults appeared to be beneficial in a study of 300 adults with bacterial meningitis.

NEJM 347; November 14: 1549

- 22) TIMI scores are absurd for the ED. The TIMI score was found retrospectively and has not been studied prospectively when much of the TIMI score information is not available.

JAMA August 16, 2000; 284; 7: 835-42

- 23) Pain meds do not mask belly pain.

J Am Coll Surg 2003; 196: 18-31

- 24) Clinical value of pelvic exams are limited. PID, open OS, adnexal mass are all findings with greater interobserver variability.

Can J Emerg Med 2003; 5: 120-2

- 25) Ear drops with steroids did better than no steroids for external otitis.

BMJ 2003; 327: 1201-5

- 26) Initial plain films are only 59% sensitive for scaphoid fracture. For this reason, some recommend immediate MRI in suspect fracture.

Emerg Med J 2002; 19: 507-9

- 27) Bicarb and/or mannitol for rhabdomyolysis is not supported.

J Trauma: Injury, Infect, Critical Care 2004; 56: 1191

- 28) 1 out of 3 people have an anxiety disorder, mood disorder or substance abuse disorder.

NEJM 352; 24; June 16, 2005: 2515-23

33.3%

- 29) Pain not related to heart rate in females.

J Pain 6 (June) 2005: 341-7

- 30) Fleets phospho-soda 2-3 tablespoons is easier and cheaper as a bowel prep than sodium phosphate pills (40 pills at \$70) or Go-Lytely (requiring 4 liters to be drunk).

The Medical Letter 47; July 4, 2005: 53

- 31) Of 287 advertisements in medical journals, only 125 claims had referenced bibliographic materials of which 18% could not be accessed ("data on file").

Lancet 2003; 361 (Jan 4): 27-32

- 32) Homan's sign is neither sensitive nor specific.
- 33) A chief complaint should not be hematuria since there are many other causes of red urine. The proper term is "melanuria" or "colored urine" as a chief complaint.
- 34) All "evidenced-based medicine" is not the same. There is a hierarchy of evidence.
- 35) With no helmet laws, 50% of riders wear one. With a universal helmet law, close to 100% of riders wear one. A motorcyclist without a helmet has a 40% increased chance of dying.

Wellness Letter August 2005; 21: 11



- 36) Limit prescriptions to one medication.
Pharmacy Practice News 2001, December 15
- 37) IV toradol, haldol and phenergan have never been FDA approved.
- 38) Gentamycin is ok to use as ophthalmological antibiotic.
Ophthalmology 1991, June 98(6): 863-9

2006

- 39) IV-tPA used in the "real" world does much more harm than good.

Stroke 2005; 36: 1232-40

- 40) Unfortunately, the data on pediatric RSI in the field and some data on adult severe head trauma and RSI has been used to forgo RSI in the field for adult medical patients with respiratory distress.

Prehosp Emerg Med 2006; 10(1): 8

- 41) Women do not present differently than men with heart attack when adjusted for age.

Heart Lung 2002; 31: 235-45

2007

- 42) Increasing fluid intake does not "thin the secretions" during a URI.

Cochrane Collaboration October 19, 2005

- 43) Avoid exposing healing wound to direct sunlight for 6-12 months especially in highly visible scars - it can cause hyperpigmentation.

N Engl J Med 355; 17; October 26, 2006: e18

- 44) Lab reference ranges are based on the 95th percentile which infers that 1 out of 20 people should fall outside the "normal" range.

J Clin Pathol 2006; 59: 1005-7

- 45) A small study on the value of naps showed that a 10 minute nap is best but a 5 minute or 30 minute nap does not help and may impair alertness.

Sleep 29; 6: 2006

46) There is really no reason to give antibiotics to any sore throat that is not an abscess.

Cochrane Collection 2007: Issue 2

47) There is conflicting information that subjective memory loss is associated with increased risk of dementia-personality changes and cognitive traits are much better screening predictors.

JAMA June 6, 2007; 297; 21: 2391-404

48) "Paronychia" is infection of lateral nail folds of the finger or toe - I&D is usually all that is necessary.

Emergency Med February 2007: 14

49) Current best tryptan appears to be Relpax at 80mg or Maxalt at 10mg.

Cephalgia 2006; 26: 1265-74

50) Spinal stenosis needs to be distinguished from "sciatica".

* Pain with standing relieved by sitting is 93% sensitive for spinal stenosis.

Review reference: NEJM 2007; 356: 2257-70

51) Do not assume who the other person in the room is - ask "and your relationship is?"

Legal Medicine 2004: 216-7



52) Patient satisfaction surveys are inaccurate.

NEJM 356; 4; January 25, 2007: 387-96

53) Pharmaceutical and medical device companies between January 2005-January 2006 spent 182 million dollars on lobbying our Congress.

JAMA May 9, 2007; 297; 18: 1970

54) Anti-oxidant supplements increase mortality.

JAMA 2007; February 28; 297(8): 842-57

55) 12 trials of over 13,000 patients proves that statins given to patients with proven CAD as a whole does not reduce mortality or non-fatal MI or non-fatal stroke.

Arch Intern Med 2006; 166: 2307-13

2008

56) No steroids for pediatric bacterial meningitis.

JAMA May 7, 2008; 299; 17: 2048-55

57) Zavanelli maneuver (to buy time for breech presentation) is mom on all fours and doc pushing the baby back in by it's bottom.

ACEP News May 2008: 5

58) Only gross hematuria in trauma needs imaging, not microscopic hematuria.

Urology 69(6); 2007: 1086-9

59) Sciatica with significant progression can be watched conservatively with similar outcomes at 1 year compared to surgery.

NEJM 2007; 356: 2245-56

60) Lacunar strokes are small subcortical infarcts (small vessel) which do relatively well.

Stroke 38; 2706: October 2007

61) Home AEDs don't improve survival.

NEJM 358; 17; April 24, 2008: 1793-1804

62) Incidental brain findings on MRI occur in 7.2% of patients (N=2000).

NEJM 357; 18; November 1, 2007: 1821-8

63) Facilitated PCI not helpful and TIMI III flow not predictive.

NEJM 358; 21; May 22, 2008: 2205-17

64) Dual platelet therapy for STEMI is premature.

Am J Cardiol 2008; 101: 435-9

65) Needle aspiration as good as stab incision for peritonsillar abscess.

Curr Opin Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg 13(3); 157: 2005

66) Pharming (mixing prescription drugs) is popular among teens.

Emerg Med May 2008: 8-12

67) Writing scripts for friends/relatives/colleagues without a chart may prevent coverage for malpractice.

Risk Management Monthly May 2008; Vol 2: 5

68) Lowering LDL and raising HDL, better glucose control, and lowering BP may all potentially worsen a patient's health depending upon the strategy used: medication alone vs lifestyle changes.

NEJM June 12, 2008; 358; 24: 2537-9





PARADIGM SHIFTS

A NEW SECTION THAT REVIEWS RECENT “PARADIGM SHIFTS” IN MEDICINE. A “PARADIGM SHIFT” IS A RADICAL CHANGE IN VIEW IN THE WAY THE WORLD IS UNDERSTOOD.

SOME HISTORICAL EXAMPLES ARE “THE WORLD IS ROUND” WHICH ALTERED THE WAY PEOPLE THOUGHT ABOUT THE HORIZON OR THE WAY THEY MADE MAPS. ANOTHER MORE MEDICAL EXAMPLE WAS THE MICROSCOPE. BEFORE THE MICROSCOPE, DUST WAS THE SMALLEST IMAGINABLE PARTICLE (“ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST...”). AFTER THE MICROSCOPE, A NEW INVISIBLE WORLD CAME TO MIND.

“CPR is CR but does it matter?”

Americans are conflicted. We want to do the best for everybody at all times. We love the heroic. Nothing in medicine captures this better than the love of CPR. We are also a people that when it comes to health care are forced to look at cost containment. What counts and what doesn't, and how much does it cost to make it count?

Right now in the US, every lifeguard, babysitter, daycare provider and a dozen other jobs are told they must take a “life-saving course” in CPR. Now add in all the EMTs, nurses, mid-levels, physicians, fire-fighters, police officers, EMS who must certify and re-certify though most will never ever use it. Those who do this very regularly when studied don't do it right we are told. And when we do do it right, we are told

none of this stuff works. But that's ok, wait 2 years and all the rules change with the mantra that now it ought to work.

The latest paradigm shift is that CPR is now CR. Breathing for dying people doesn't do much and makes the chest compressions too complicated for someone in a panic that has never really done this before (though they've paid for and taken the course 5 times).

But does any of this matter? Apparently not. Only about 1% make it out of the hospital – and most of them will die in the next 6 months. As a society we must shift the paradigm again to don't initiate CPR in the majority of patients – and stop training all these people to do something that doesn't work. The cost is way too high and the outcome is almost universally dismal.

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