**ISCHAEMIC HEART DISEASE**

Low molecular weight heparin to treat pulmonary embolism ► In a meta-analysis of 12 trials, low molecular weight heparin was associated with a non-significant decrease in recurrent symptomatic venous thromboembolism at the end of treatment (1.4% v 2.4%; odds ratio (OR) 0.63, 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.33 to 1.18) and at three months (3.0% v 4.4%; OR 0.68, 95% CI 0.42 to 1.09) compared to unfractionated heparin. Similar estimates were obtained for patients who presented with symptomatic pulmonary embolism (1.7% v 2.3%; OR 0.72, 95% CI 0.35 to 1.48) or asymptomatic pulmonary embolism (1.2% v 3.2%; OR 0.53, 95% CI 0.15 to 1.88). For major bleeding complications, the odds ratio favouring low molecular weight heparin (1.3% v 2.1%, OR 0.67, 95% CI 0.36 to 1.27) was also not significant. This suggests that low molecular weight heparin is probably a safer alternative for the treatment of pulmonary as well as deep vein thrombosis.


**Ranolazine: the new antianginal** ► The antianginal action of ranolazine may be related to partial inhibition of fatty acid oxidation, which can produce anti-ischaemic effects without depressing haemodynamic function. Inhibition of fatty acid oxidation reciprocally increases glucose oxidation, which generates more adenosine triphosphate for each molecule of oxygen consumed. This shift in substrate selection may reduce myocardial oxygen supply needed to support a given level of cardiac work so that for any level of coronary flow, ischaemia should be less likely. Trough exercise duration increased by 115.6 seconds from baseline in both ranolazine groups (pooled) versus 97.7 seconds in the placebo group (p = 0.01). The times to angina and to electrocardiographic ischemia increased in the ranolazine groups, at peak more than at trough. The exercise did not depend on changes in blood pressure, heart rate, or background antianginal treatment and persisted throughout 12 weeks. Ranolazine reduced angina attacks and glyceryl trinitrate use by about one per week versus placebo (p < 0.02). There was no difference in survival or cardiovascular events in the two groups.


**HEART FAILURE**

Exercise training in heart failure saves lives: a meta-analysis ► In health taking more exercise is associated with better prognosis; the same should hold true when you are not healthy. Single studies of exercise in heart failure have not been powered to show reduced mortality. This meta-analysis suggests mortality was significantly lower in the exercise group (log rank χ² = 5.9, p = 0.015). The hazard ratio for mortality was computed to be 0.65 (95% CI 0.46 to 0.92). These results imply a number needed to treat of 17 to prevent one death in two years. This effect was not explained by any difference in drug regimen.

► **Exercise training meta-analysis of trials in patients with chronic heart failure. (ExTraMATCH). BMJ 2004;328:189.**

**HYPERTENSION**

Checking blood pressure every six months is as good as every three months ► How often should the general practitioner...
A 66 year old man was referred to our hospital with post-infarction angina. He had experienced an inferior myocardial infarction 21 and 15 years previously, and an anteroseptal myocardial infarction two years previously. He was scheduled for coronary angiography on day 3 after hospitalisation. Left ventriculography showed akinetic inferior and anterior walls, proximal occlusion of the right coronary artery (RCA), occlusion of the circumflex coronary artery (Cx), and occlusion of the distal third at the left anterior descending (LAD) coronary artery. Intense collateral circulation was observed. Due to the persistence of angina, coronary bypass surgery was indicated. During surgery, after opening the pericardium, an abnormality was found in the anterior wall of the right ventricle. Near the right ventricular outflow tract an aneurysm was observed (left upper panel). Four saphenous vein grafts were used for the RCA, LAD, Cx, and diagonal revascularisation. The right ventricular aneurysm was not corrected. At the end of the procedure there was no difficulty weaning the patient off cardiopulmonary bypass. There were no postoperative complications; the patient was discharged seven days after the operation and is doing well eight weeks postoperatively. Echocardiography (right upper panel) and magnetic resonance imaging (panels A and B) performed on day 15 postoperatively confirmed the right ventricular aneurysm. To our knowledge this patient is the third case to be described in the literature and the first directly visualised.

**Journals scanned**


**Reviewers**

Dr Diana Gorog, Dr Akhil Kapur, Dr Masood Khan, Dr Alistair Lindsay, Dr Andrew Sharp