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## Parkinson's testing

**PARKINSON'S** Disease may be detected in its earliest stages via a speech test.

The finding comes from researchers at Michigan State University who developed specialty software which breaks down spoken sentences and analyses them in sections 1/50th of a second in length.

According to the researchers, this software allows them to pick up on slurred speech, changes in speech rhythm and other symptoms much earlier than the patient or their family detect an issue.

Testing of the equipment on 76 people (50% of which had the disease) revealed the software picked up the condition in 9 out of 10 sufferers.

According to the researchers, the software was more successful than they expected, and picked up the condition in an average of two seconds per patient.

## ADHD meds drop crime?

**MEDICATION** for attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may help to curb crime rates, according to a new study.

Published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the study, *Medication for Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder and Criminality*, looked at information on 25,656 Swedish ADHD patients, including their pharmacologic treatment, and subsequent criminal convictions from 2006 through 2009.

According to the study's findings compared with nonmedication

periods, patients who received ADHD medication, had a significant reduction of 32% in the criminality rate for men and 41% for women.

In addition, researchers found that rate reduction remained between 17% and 46% in sensitivity analyses among men, with factors that included different types of drugs (stimulant vs. nonstimulant) and outcomes (type of crime).

"Among patients with ADHD, rates of criminality were lower during periods when they were receiving ADHD medication," the researchers said.

"These findings raise the possibility that the use of medication reduces the risk of criminality among patients with ADHD," the researchers added.

## Patients responsibility

**PATIENTS** need to take the lead when it comes to receiving preventative healthcare, according to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

"It is estimated that 80% of premature heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes and 40% of cancer could be prevented through interventions that lead to healthy diet, regular physical activity, and avoidance of tobacco products," said Dr Liz Marles, RACGP President.

"Often perceptions such as lack of time, or not having any 'obvious' symptoms hold people back from making an appointment with their GP.

"However, regular appointments could result in an early diagnosis, or better still, prevention of something more serious," she added.

## SphygmoCor approval

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has approved the SphygmoCor XCEL system, to noninvasively measure central aortic blood pressures and arterial stiffness.

## PD comp winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Abbey Butler of Flinders Medical Centre, who was the lucky winner of last Friday's Mask in a Cup competition.

For more chances to win, see page 2 of today's issue.

## Immunisation resource

**AUSTRALIAN** parents who refuse to immunise their children are the target of a new campaign run jointly by the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Medical Association.

The campaign is aimed at educating parents about immunisations via the publication of a new booklet which tackles the misinformation about vaccines which has contributed to a current six-fold increase in parents who reject immunisation for their children.

The booklet, titled *The Science of Immunisation*, is written in an easily-accessible style and supplemented with clear illustrations, and answers common questions and dispels common myths about the pros and cons of immunisation.

To obtain a copy of the booklet, visit [www.science.org.au](http://www.science.org.au).

## Cell culture vaccine

**THE** first seasonal influenza vaccine licensed in the United States produced using cultured animal cells, instead of fertilised chicken eggs, Flucelvax, has been approved for use in the US.

The manufacturing process for Flucelvax is similar to the egg-based production method, however the virus strains included in the vaccine are grown in animal cells of mammalian origin instead of in eggs.

According to the FDA, advantages of cell culture technology include the ability to maintain an adequate supply of readily available, previously tested and characterised cells for use in vaccine production and the potential for a faster start-up of the vaccine manufacturing process in the event of a pandemic.

## Australian inclusion

**THE** Minister for Social Inclusion Mark Butler has launched Social Inclusion Week (24 Nov until 2 Dec) recently, saying the event encourages all Australians to stop and think about those in the community that are disconnected or disadvantaged.

"It's also a great time to recognise and celebrate difference in our community, and the opportunities that diversity presents," said Butler.

## Closer to transparency

**THE** European Medicines Agency should not decide whether it will publish clinical-trial data, but how, according to Guido Rasi, Executive Director of the EMA.

The statement was part of Rasi's opening at the EMA's recent workshop on access to clinical-trial data and transparency (22 Nov).

The event marked the first step in the process to proactive publication of clinical-trial data, a decision the Agency made earlier this year.

The workshop was designed to enable the EMA to gather the views, interests and concerns from a range of institutions, groups and individuals.

Based on the discussions that went on at the meeting, five areas were identified as the "next steps" in the process, including: protecting patient confidentiality; clinical-trial-data formats; rules of engagement; good analysis practice; and legal aspects.

In light of this, advisory groups with broad representation from all parties will be formed and will start working on the five topics in early 2013, with their final advice expected by the end of April 2013.

The publication of clinical-trial data is expected to come into effect by 01 Jan 2014.

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The Electronic Transfer of Prescription Education Program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement between the Commonwealth and The Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

### Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Tony Carollo, Director, Carollo Horton & Associates.**



### Insurance and "Building & Values"

Only recently we had occasion to revisit the age old problem of "how much insurance do I buy for my freehold building"?

There are just so many variables to consider and it can be a daunting task.

Basically you need:

- 1) to have enough sum insured to be able to clear away the debris and rebuild at current market costs
- 2) and have enough left over to cover for rent lost as a result of the building being unoccupied.

Loss of Rent is the easiest to calculate.

Simply multiply the monthly rent by the time it will take to clear the site, draw up plans, council building approval, construction and re-tenant.

HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE?

Remember to allow for the possible delays in supply of contractors if you are in a cyclone, earthquake, or bush fire prone area.

In summary you will need to be paid for loss of rent unit your building is re-tenanted.

Clear the site - Insurers call it "Removal of Debris".

We have seen cases where unknown asbestos was discovered.

The additional cost and delays caused by the asbestos discovery was over \$200,000.

Rebuilding cost is simpler to estimate and there are also some good 'online' guides to assist.

Always allow for local building conditions, adjust for additional costs to comply with what council may require and the possible additional costs incurred to secure building and other contractors particularly after a catastrophe.

Very little involved in insurance is 'rocket science' stuff.

As the insured, you do need to apply some common sense thinking to calculate enough sum insured to put you back in business if you are unlucky enough to be involved in a problem.

## Australians are long liverers

**AUSTRALIANS** are living longer and with fewer limitations to daily activities, according to the latest report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The report, *Changes in life expectancy and disability in Australia 1998 to 2009*, looked at data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics between 1998 and 2009 and found that between 1998 and 2009, life expectancy at birth has risen from 75.9 years to 79.3 years for males, and from 81.5 years to 83.9 years for females.

Researchers also noted that in addition to living longer, there was also an increase in disability-free years.

Speaking about the findings, AIHW spokesperson Brent Diverty said "Australian boys born in 2009 could expect to live an average 61.6 years without disability and another 17.7 years with disability, including 5.5 years with severe or profound activity limitation".

"Girls born in 2009 could expect to live an average 64.3 years

without disability and 19.6 years with disability, including 7.5 years with severe or profound activity limitation," he added.

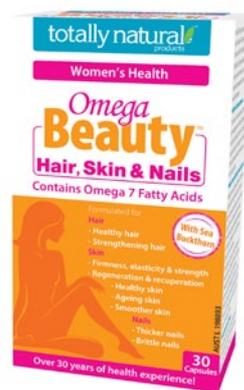
The report also found that Australian males already aged 65 in 2009 could expect to live an additional 8.2 years without disability, and 10.5 years with disability (3.5 years with severe disability), and females could expect an additional 9.7 without disability and another 12.1 with disability (5.6 years with severe disability).

"The 'downside', if you like, to Australians living longer, is that as the population ages there is expected to be more older Australians living with disability," said Diverty.

"We expect to see an increasing number of older people in the community with disability and severe or profound activity limitation.

"But it is important to remember that disability does not necessarily equate to poor health or illness," he added.

## Want healthy hair, skin and nails?



Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving three lucky readers the chance to win the new Omega Beauty Hair, Skin and Nails formula (30s), courtesy of **Totally Natural Products.**

Discover our secret for healthy and beautiful looking Hair, Skin & Nails!

The new Omega Beauty Hair, Skin and Nails formula contains Sea Buckthorn Oil rich in Omega 7 Fatty Acids, Colloidal Silica, Biotin and Zinc.

Omega Beauty Hair, Skin & Nails works at a cellular level promoting beautifully strong hair, healthy skin and strong nails.

Available in 30s RRP \$ 19.95 and 60s RRP \$34.95.

For more information visit [www.totallynatural.com.au](http://www.totallynatural.com.au).

To win simply be one of the first three readers to send the correct answer to the daily question below.

### Name an ingredient in Omega Beauty Hair, Skin & Nails

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Hint: Visit [www.totallynatural.com.au](http://www.totallynatural.com.au).

## DISPENSARY CORNER

### BLOOD borne plague?

A local council in western Serbia has spread panic across its jurisdiction after it issued a public health warning that there was a vampire running rampant.

The vampire in question, Sava Savanovic, is a local legend, and was believed have been trapped in an old watermill on the Rogacica river, surviving on the blood of hapless locals who wandered into the mill to grind their grain.

The mill was bought some years ago by the Jagodic family, who were too frightened of releasing the vampire to undertake any repairs to the mill, leaving it to collapse recently.

During its collapse, locals believe that Sava managed to escape.

"People are worried, everybody knows the legend of this vampire and the thought that he is now homeless and looking for somewhere else and possibly other victims is terrifying people. We are all frightened," said local councillor Miodrag Vujetic.

As part of their warning, the council has advised residents to hang garlic from their windows and doors, and put a "holy cross" in every room of their houses.

### BRIGADOON?

The South Pacific Island, Sandy Island, does not actually exist, according to researchers from the University of Sydney.

The Island shows up on marine charts and Google Maps, and is supposedly located between Australia and New Caledonia.

Scientists from the University of Sydney became suspicious and decided to investigate the island after examination of navigation charts revealed that the ocean where Sandy resides is very, very deep (1,400m).

When they arrived at the Sandy Island's locale, it was not there.

"How did it find its way onto the maps? We just don't know, but we plan to follow up and find out," said one researcher.