Effect of Transcendental Meditation on Employee Stress, Depression, and Burnout: A Randomized Controlled Study, Charles Eldor, MD, MPH, FACP, Sanford Nudel, EID, Francis Moriarty, EID, Randi Nudel, EID.

A total of 40 secondary schoolteachers and support staff at the Bennington School in Vermont, a therapeutic school for children with behavioral problems, were randomly assigned to either practice of the Transcendental Meditation program or a walk-all control group. The Transcendental Meditation program was effective in reducing psychological distress in teachers and support staff working in a therapeutic school with behavioral problems.

Weight Patterns Before and After Total Joint Arthroplasty and Characteristics Associated with Weight Change, Mary Paas, PhD, Donna Kist Silverstein, PhD, Roya Raman, PhD, Caroline A. Wexler, PhD, Jennifer A. Nicholl, PhD, Richard A. Shaker, PhD, Donald Fithian, MD.

Of 30,632 patients with total joint arthroplasty identified, 34.5% underwent total hip arthroplasty and 65.5% had total knee arthroplasty. Most patients remained the same weight during the preoperative and after the procedure. Before and after total hip arthroplasty, men were less likely to lose or gain weight than were women. Older patients were less likely to gain weight. Specific groups were more susceptible to weight change and could benefit from weight management interventions.

Implementation Study 23 Highly Reliable Procedural Teams: The Journey to Spread the Universal Protocol in Diagnostic Imaging, Todd B. Hull, MD, MBA, MPH, Matthew B. Allen, MD, FACS, FASCRS, Donald Fithian, MD, MD, FACS, FASCRS; Ian C MacMillan, MD, PhD, FASCRS, Steve Beretta, MD, FACS, FASCRS; Elaina Heagerty, PhD, Michael Connell, EdD, Shay Stephens, MD, FASCRS, Shuyu Shen, MD, FACS, FASCRS; David Roberson, MD, FACS, FASCRS, Donald Fithian, MD.

The study reveals trends in knee arthroplasty. Most patients remained the same weight during the preoperative and after the procedure. Before and after total hip arthroplasty, men were less likely to lose or gain weight than were women. Older patients were less likely to gain weight. Specific groups were more susceptible to weight change and could benefit from weight management interventions.
Complex Case Conferences

Associated with Reduced Hospital Admissions for High-Risk Patients with Multiple Comorbidities.
Philip Tuso, MD, FACP; Heather L Watson, MBA, CHM; Lynn Garafalo-Wright, DPPD, MHA; Gail Lindsay, RN, MA; Ana Jackson, PhD; Maria Taitano, MD; Sandra Koyama, MD, Michael Kanter, MD

The authors studied the effect person-focused care may have on reducing avoidable admissions to the hospital. Observed-over-expected hospital readmission rates were lowest for patients receiving a postdischarge visit with a home health nurse and a follow-up visit with their physician (0.54), compared with solely a physician visit (0.81), home health visit (1.2), or phone call (1.55). Various social issues may contribute to hospital readmissions, including caregiver knowledge, ability to care for oneself at home, and issues related to medications (adherence, ability to pay, and knowledge about potential side effects).

Special Report

David Mosel, MD; John Thompson, MD

Ninety-five percent of women later found to have breast cancer were seen an average of 5 times in medical offices in the year preceding diagnosis. By 2011, almost 50% of all mammograms were scheduled using the self-referral process, with more than 25% of cancers diagnosed through this process that year. As the number of screening tests performed is used as the sole measure of screening effectiveness, segments of the at-risk population are likely to be missed.

Investigation of Women with Postmenopausal Uterine Bleeding: Clinical Practice Recommendations.
Malcolm G Munro, MD, FRCS(c), FACOG; The Southern California Permanente Medical Group’s Abnormal Uterine Bleeding Working Group

Postmenopausal uterine bleeding can be spontaneous or related to ovarian hormone replacement therapy or to the use of selective estrogen receptor modulators. The guideline development group determined that, for initial management of spontaneous postmenopausal bleeding, primary assessment may be with either endometrial sampling or transvaginal ultrasonography. Guidelines are also provided for patients receiving selective estrogen receptor modulators or hormone replacement therapy.

The Role of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy in Medicine: Addressing the Psychological and Physical Symptoms Stemming from Adverse Life Experiences.
Francine Shapiro, PhD

A substantial body of research shows that adverse life experiences contribute to both psychological and biomedical pathology. Twenty-four randomized controlled trials support the positive effects of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy in the treatment of emotional trauma and other adverse life experiences relevant to clinical practice. Twelve randomized studies of the eye movement component noted rapid decreases in negative emotions and/or vividness of disturbing images.

Pay for Performance for Salaried Health Care Providers: Methodology, Challenges, and Pitfalls.
John R Britton, MD

Pay for performance has been recommended by the Institute of Medicine as an incentive to improve the quality of health care, but it is important to separate provider contributions from other influencing factors within the health care system. If appropriate methodology is not used, much time, effort, and money may be expended in gathering data that may be potentially misleading or even useless, such that good performance may go unrecognized and mediocre performance may be rewarded.

Narrative Medicine

Eluding Meaninglessness: A Note to Self in Regard to Camus, Critical Care, and the Absurd.
Thomas John Papadimos, MD, MPH

The author presents a medical narrative, as a catharsis, regarding Albert Camus’s The Myth of Sisyphus in an attempt to elude meaninglessness in his difficult everyday practice of critical care medicine. It is well documented that physicians who practice critical care medicine are subject to burnout. A third alternative to Camus’s faith in the divine or to commit suicide is the acceptance of a life without prima facie evidence of purpose and meaning.

Person-Focused Care at Kaiser Permanente.
Jim Bellows, PhD; Scott Young, MD; Alide Chase, MS

Patient-focused care has been described as an extension of patient-centered care, recognizing that patients’ medical needs are best understood and addressed in the context of their entire lives, including their life goals and social, economic, emotional, and spiritual functioning. The authors describe emerging examples in several areas: interdisciplinary care planning, behavior change, social care, patient-reported outcome measures, and Total Health.

NARRATIVE MEDICINE

The Man In The Mirror: Reflections On Dealing With A Family Member’s Dementia.
Phillip LaBorie

Original artwork accompanies this reflection of a man’s care of his brother with dementia, complicated by severe cardiovascular and pulmonary disease. “The good news is that all of his symptoms and stresses disappear when we’re making art together.”

SOUL OF THE HEALER

Original Visual Art

24 “Los Angeles Harbor Lighthouse (Angel’s Gate), San Pedro, California” Anil Thomas, MD
32 “Erice” Samuel H Glassner, MD
86 “Sunset at Sukhna Lake, Chandigarh, India” Vishal Sharma, MD, DM
94 “The Man in the Mirror” Phillip LaBorie
CLINICAL MEDICINE

ECG Diagnosis: The Effect of Ionized Serum Calcium Levels on Electrocardiogram.

Jonathan D Gardner, MD; Joe B Callkins, Jr, MD; FACC; FACP; FASE; Glen E Garrison, MD; FACC

High and low levels of ionized serum calcium concentration can produce characteristic changes on the electrocardiogram. These changes are almost entirely limited to the duration of the ST segment with no change in the QRS complexes or T waves. High ionized serum calcium shortens the ST segment, and low ionized serum calcium prolongs the ST segment. Two common clinical scenarios are presented.

Image Diagnosis: Sudden Paraplegia in Abdominal Aortic Thrombosis.

Alexandre Costa, MD; Andreia Veiga, MD

A 79-year-old woman with a medical history of hypertension and cardiac surgery for mitral valve repair was seen in the Emergency Department after falling to the floor in her bedroom. Acute abdominal aortic occlusion is an uncommon condition frequently resulting from saddle embolism or thrombus of an atherosclerotic plaque. Sudden neurologic symptoms can occur.

Image Diagnosis: Spontaneous Hematoma from Scurvy.

Diane Apostolakos, MD, MS; Lee O Halvorsen, MD

A 58-year-old alcoholic man presents with pain, swelling, and bruising of his right leg, without history of trauma or injury. He had frequent spontaneous hematomas in his legs. This patient drank a 1.75 liter bottle of vodka daily, smoked cigarettes, and ate mostly precooked hash brown potatoes, pasta, and occasional canned tuna. He did not eat fresh vegetables and rarely ate fruit, leading to Vitamin C deficiency.

NURSING RESEARCH & PRACTICE

Research

Self-Reported Activities and Outcomes of Ambulatory Care Staff Registered Nurses: An Exploration. June L Rondinelli, RN, MSN, CNS; Amma K Omery, RN, DNSc, NENA-BC; Cecilia L Crawford, RN, DNP; Joyce A Johnson, PhD, NNA-BC

Ambulatory care is a growing field of nursing practice. There has been an ongoing effort to identify the desired role of the staff registered nurses (RN) in outpatient care and provide linkages to preferred outcomes. Survey respondents were ambulatory care staff RNs from various primary and specialty care clinics (n = 187) in an integrated health care organization in Southern California. This research study supports what the nursing staff might judge.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Think of Salt in Preventing Falls in the Geriatric Population

Spodick’s Sign: A Helpful Electrocardiographic Clue to the Diagnosis of Acute Pericarditis

The Editor of the Permanente Journal received a letter from the reader that is printed below.

To the Editor:

I read with interest your recent article about Spodick’s Sign. I believe it is a useful tool in the diagnosis of acute pericarditis.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

The Permanente Journal, Winter 2014, Volume 18, No. 1

Online Only

Available at: www.thepermanentejournal.org/issues/2014/winter.html