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321 EDITORIAL

**Health Information Systems in the Caribbean:
Time For Attention**

D Eldemire-Shearer

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

323 Protective Effect of *Carica papaya* L Leaf Extract against Alcohol Induced Acute Gastric Damage and Blood Oxidative Stress in Rats

M Indran, AA Mahmood, UR Kuppasamy

This study investigated the effects of acute exposure to alcohol on gastric mucosa and the possible ameliorating role of Carica papaya leaf aqueous extract on blood oxidative stress indices. The extract conferred some protection against acute gastric and oxidative damage.

327 The *in vitro* Anti-denaturation Effects Induced by Natural Products and Non-steroidal Compounds in Heat Treated (Immunogenic) Bovine Serum Albumin is Proposed as a Screening Assay for the Detection of Anti-inflammatory Compounds, without the use of Animals, in the Early Stages of the Drug Discovery Process

LAD Williams, A O'Connor, L Latore, O Dennis, S Ringer, JA Whittaker, J Conrad, B Vogler, H Rosner, W Kraus

Heat treated (immunogenic) Bone Serum Albumin is hereby proposed as an assay for the detection of selected therapeutic drugs.

332 The Initiation of Coronary Angioplasty and Stenting in a Single Outpatient Centre in Barbados

A Sparman, CV Browne, L Wills

A report of the initial experience of coronary angioplasty and stenting in an outpatient setting, at the Carib-American Heart Centre in Barbados, with a look at the feasibility and safety of the procedure.

337 Clinical Determinants of Increased Left Ventricular Mass on Echocardiogram in Medically Treated Afro-Caribbean Hypertensive Patients

TC Martin, YG Bhaskar, KV Umesh

Echocardiograms were performed in 100 Afro-Caribbean patients with hypertension. Increased left ventricular mass index was seen in 55%. Poorly controlled hypertension was the greatest contributing factor to the finding, with hypertrophy increasing with increasing systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Obesity may also have played a role.

342 Echocardiographic Findings in a Contemporary Afro-Caribbean Population Referred for Evaluation of Unexplained Syncope

TC Martin, BK Bains, PA Aslam

The echocardiogram was abnormal in 34% of patients referred for evaluation of syncope in Antigua and Barbuda. Abnormalities which may have contributed to unexplained syncope were seen in 11% of patients, all over 35 years old.

(Continued on inside front cover)

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346 Increasing Incidence of Admissions to a General Hospital for Deliberate Self-harm in Trinidad

G Hutchinson, C Bruce, V Simmons

This paper compares admissions to the Port-of-Spain General Hospital, Trinidad and Tobago, for self-harm to a previous study done at the same site. There is an increasing incidence of this behaviour presenting to the hospital with the most significant increase seen in men in the 35–44-year age group.

352 Depression among Adolescents, Aged 13–19 years. Attending Secondary Schools in Trinidad: Prevalence and Associated Factors

RG Maharaj, F Alli, K Cumberbatch, P Laloo, S Mohammed, A Ramesar, N Rampersad, N Roopnarinesingh, I Ramtahal

This paper describes a survey to determine the prevalence of depression (as determined by the Beck Depression inventory) and its associated factors among adolescents in Trinidad. The prevalence was 25.3%. Adolescents who experienced violence in their home were three times more likely to be depressed than those who did not.

360 Toward Effective School-Based Substance Abuse Prevention: “Breaking The Cycle” Programme in Antigua and Barbuda

TC Martin, JA Josiah-Martin, CW Roberts, HP Henry

Cochrane Database review identified factors associated with successful school-based prevention of illicit drug use. The “Breaking the Cycle” programme, initiated in schools in Antigua and Barbuda in 2001, includes these factors: trained teachers, interactive techniques, life skills training, drug resistance skills training, drug harm education and cultural appropriateness.

364 Factors Affecting Completion of a 28-day inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Programme at the University Hospital of the West Indies

L Barnaby, RC Gibson

Factors affecting treatment completion were studied in 224 patients in the Substance Abuse Unit of the University Hospital of the West Indies. Of the 23% of patients who failed to complete their treatment, those with cocaine dependence primarily were significantly more likely to fail than those with primarily alcohol dependence.

Continued on Inside Back Cover

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369 Routine Laboratory Investigations in Infants and Children Presenting with Fever and Seizures at the University Hospital of the West Indies

D Donaldson, H Trotman, M Barton, R Melbourne-Chambers

Fifty-nine children, aged 6 months to eight years, who presented with fever and seizures were reviewed. There was no laboratory abnormalities significantly associated with a bacterial infection. Routine laboratory investigations in children with seizures and fever were of limited usefulness.

373 Dengue Infection in Patients Presenting with Neurological Manifestations in a Dengue Endemic Population

ST Jackson, A Mullings, F Bennett, C Khan, G Gordon-Strachan, T Rhoden

Results from this study support the need to include dengue in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with suspected viral central nervous system infections.

377 Prevalence, Risk Factors and Clinical Features Associated with Intestinal Parasitic Infections in Children from San Juan y Martínez, Pinar del Río, Cuba

AA Escobedo, R Cañete, FA Núñez

Abdominal pain had a high sensitivity for prediction of intestinal parasitic infections in children in this study.

383 A Comparative Study of the Quality and Availability of Health Information used to Facilitate Cost Burden Analysis of Diabetes and Hypertension in the Caribbean

C Cunningham-Myrie, M Reid, TE Forrester

This report critiques the quality and availability of health information used to facilitate cost burden analysis of diabetes and hypertension in the Caribbean

393 Interstitial Cells of Cajal and Intestinal Function in Trinidadian Children

T Anatol, W Mohammed, C Rao

This is a study comparing the density of the Interstitial cell of Cajal in the bowel wall of children with Hirschsprung's disease and anorectal anomalies with that of normal controls

398 Prevalence of *Chlamydia Trachomatis*/Neisseria Gonorrhoeae and Human Papilloma Virus among Women-at Risk in the Aegian Region of Turkey, and their Knowledge about HIV/AIDS

H Gazi, S Surucuoglu, G Yolasigmaz, M Sen, S Akcali, G Dinc, A Teker, T Sanlidag, G Koroğlu

The authors evaluated the prevalence of selected sexually transmitted diseases among brothel based sex-workers. Estimated rates of C trachomatis/N gonorrhoeae and HPV cannot be neglected. Further studies are necessary to determine the real status of sexually transmitted diseases in this population.

CASE REPORTS

403 An Abnormal Variation of the Brachial Plexus with Potential Clinical Significance

M Loukas, RS Tubbs, D Stewart

406 Congenital Cutis Laxa Associated with Growth Retardation

M Seyhan, M Esrefoglu, H Ozcan, A Akinci

DENTAL FORUM

410 Assessment of Alveolar Bone Levels from Bitewing, Periapical and Panoramic Radiographs in Periodontitis Patients

R Gedik, I Marakoglu, S Demirer

414 Oral Health Status and Treatment Needs of a Rural Indian Fishing Community

Meghashyam Bhat

A study was conducted to assess the oral health status and treatment needs of a rural fishing community. WHO criteria were used for the purpose of the study. A high degree of unmet treatment need was found in the study population.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

418 Intra-abdominal Lymphangioma: An Unusual Lesion in an Adult Woman

DH-A Skeete, G Char, H Fletcher, CS Bolt

420 OBITUARY

422 Forthcoming Meetings