

von Renteln D, Inoue H, Minami H, Werner YB, Pace A, Kersten JF, Much CC, Schachschal G, Mann O, Keller J, Fuchs KH, Rösch T. **Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy for the Treatment of Achalasia: A Prospective Single Center Study.** *Am J Gastroenterol* 2011 Nov 8. doi: 10.1038/ajg.2011.388.

In this small single centre study, von Renteln et al report the outcome of a new endoscopic technique for complete myotomy, used to treat achalasia. The procedure was performed under general anaesthesia. Initial results for 16 patients with achalasia, at 3 months are promising. 90% of patients achieved symptomatic improvement.

Ng FH, Tungal P, Chu WM, Lam KF, Li A, Chan K, Lau YK, Kng C, Keung KK, Kwan A, Wong BC. **Esomeprazole Compared With Famotidine in the Prevention of Upper Gastrointestinal Bleeding in Patients With Acute Coronary Syndrome or Myocardial Infarction.** *Am J Gastroenterol* 2011 Nov 22. doi: 10.1038/ajg.2011.385.

Patients diagnosed with acute coronary syndrome and myocardial infarction are usually treated with a combination of anti-platelet therapies. The optimum therapy to prevent upper GI bleeding for such patients remains uncertain; furthermore there have been concerns, in the past; regarding the interaction between proton pump inhibitors and clopidogrel. In this study 311 patients, receiving dual anti platelet therapy were randomized to famotidine, 40 mg O.D. or esomeprazole 20 mg nocte. The end point was upper GI bleeding. Esomeprazole was superior to famotidine.

Lazo M, Hernaez R, Bonekamp S, Kamel IR, Brancati FL, Guallar E, Clark JM. **Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and mortality among US adults: prospective cohort study.** *BMJ*. 2011 Nov 18; 343: d6891. doi: 10.1136/bmj.d6891. <http://www.bmj.com/content/343/bmj.d6891>.

In this prospective study, 11371 patients were screened for fatty liver disease. The prevalence of fatty liver disease with abnormal and normal liver enzymes was 3.1 and 16.4 % of the sample. The group with normal liver function tests had multivariate adjusted hazard ratios for deaths from all causes of 0.92 and those with abnormal liver enzymes had multivariate adjusted hazard ratios for deaths from all causes of 0.8, and no significant increased risk of death from cardiovascular or liver disease. The authors concluded that in this study fatty liver disease was not associated with an increased risk of mortality.

Aarntzen EH, Srinivas M, De Wilt JH, Jacobs JF, Lesterhuis WJ, Windhorst AD, Troost EG, Bonenkamp JJ, van Rossum MM, Blokx WA, Mus RD, Boerman OC, Punt CJ, Figdor CG, Oyen WJ, de Vries IJ. **Early identification of antigen-specific immune responses in vivo by [¹⁸F]-labeled 3'-fluoro-3'-deoxy-thymidine ([¹⁸F]FLT) PET imaging.** *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 2011; 108: 18396-99.

Vaccine therapy is being developed for many tumours. In this study PET scanning was able to identify patient that had responded to dendritic cell vaccine therapy. Patients with malignant melanoma that had been immunised with dendritic cells had [¹⁸F]-labeled 3'-fluoro-3'-deoxy-

thymidine ($[^{18}\text{F}]\text{FLT}$) PET at varying time points after vaccination and the level of lymph node tracer uptake was shown to correlate with antibody and antigen specific immune responses.

This technique may be of future use in the assessment of response for patients receiving vaccine therapies for GI infections and malignancies.

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News editor