

What's Up in Urology Journal, Autumn 2008?

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Urology for People is a new section in the *Urology Journal* for providing people a summary of what is published in this journal and describing urological entities in a simple language. It is the second issue in which this section is added. The Persian translation of this article is available from www.uj.unrc.ir.

It is noteworthy that the findings in medical papers are usually not directly applicable in clinical practice and patients should consult their physicians before any utilization of the results of medical studies.

OBJECTS IN BLADDER

Several surgeons have reported detection of an object called *foreign body* in the bladder. These can be surgical instruments or fragments of catheters, intrauterine contraceptive devices that are migrated to the bladder, and objects inserted into the urethra. Dr Rafique from Pakistan has reported his 16 patients with such objects in their bladder and has reviewed all the related reports around the world. Most of the foreign bodies were surgical gauze remained in the bladder after an operation (mistake by the surgical team) or intrauterine contraceptive devices migrated from the uterus in women. Self-insertion of the objects is another common cause, which is mostly seen in mentally challenged patients. Also, insertion of a thermometer in females, whose urethra is short, may lead to slipping of the device into the bladder. Dr Rafique has also described the methods to extract the objects attempted by the surgeons so far. Most of the foreign bodies can be removed by endoscopic methods; an instrument called *cystoscope* is inserted into the bladder and the object is removed through the urethra.

Women should be careful about using intrauterine device, and if lost, they should consult with their physician to make sure it has not migrated into other organs. If they refer late, a stone may be formed around the device that makes its removal difficult. Also, parents and care givers to mentally

challenged patients should be cautious about this problem and take any prolonged urinary complaint seriously.

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HOW TO MINIMIZE COMPLICATIONS AFTER CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision in boys is a common surgical operation, especially in Moslem nations. The operation is safe and usually, no problem occurs thereafter. However, a small number of boys with circumcision may suffer from narrowing of the tip of their urethra. Dr Bazmamoun and his colleagues in Hamedan decided to advise a group of parents whose boys were circumcized to rub a lubricant jelly on circumcision site each time they change the child's diaper. They compared children in this group with other circumcised boys and found that a smaller percentage of the children in the first group developed narrowing of the urethral tip (namely, *meatal stenosis*) and infection of the wound.

Lubrication of the circumcision site has been recommended by some surgeons; however, its benefits had not been clearly shown in any studies before Dr Bazmamoun reported their study results. Parents can discuss what they are required to do after circumcision of their children, and lubrication is an option that should be done

according to the recommendations of their surgeon.

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DO GENES HAVE A ROLE IN BLADDER CANCER?

You might have heard that some factors like smoking can increase the risk of bladder cancer. Recently, genetic variations or disorders have also been added to the list of such factors. However, in contrast to the matter of smoking, the role of genes has not been confirmed yet, and scientists are still working on a series of genes that may cause, or let's say attribute to the development of bladder cancer. Dr Karimianpour and associates assessed the *RAS* gene in a group of patients with bladder cancer in Tehran, and surprisingly, they found no impaired *RAS* gene in their patients. This gene has been suggested by many researchers around the world to have a role in bladder cancer, and the study by Dr Karimianpour shows that in Iranian patients, *RAS* gene might not be a cause. However, studies on a larger number of patients are required to make a stronger conclusion.

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DIABETIC KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PATIENTS

Diabetes mellitus has been always a challenge for the physicians. It not only affects the native kidneys of the patients, but also continues its damaging effect on a transplanted kidney. So, there are concerns about transplantation in patients with diabetes mellitus. Dr Einollahi and his colleagues in Bqiyatollah Hospital in Tehran have addressed this issue. They found that the overall chance of survival of the patient and the transplanted kidney is lower among diabetic patients. This poorer outcome of transplantation is more prominent in those who have type 1 diabetes mellitus, which is the insulin-dependent type that usually develops in younger ages. It should be noted that the above concerns are not a barrier to transplantation in diabetic patients. However, Dr Einollahi's study suggests that both

the physician and the patient be more careful about diabetes, and a close monitoring of blood sugar and the transplanted kidney function must be considered after transplantation.

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SAFFRON FOR INFERTILITY?

Herbal medicine is popular in folk medicine, but its efficacy should be assessed by scientific methods. Recently, a trend has been observed in Iran, and also the world, towards using herbs in modern medicine. In Iran, saffron is an attractive herb in folk medicine, with a long list of its benefits. To scrutinize the potential usage of saffron, Dr Heidary and his research team carried out a study on infertile men. They prescribed saffron, solved in milk, for 3 months and found that the number and quality of the sperm of the participants improved to a great extent. This interesting finding can be the primary step for further studies. The effect of saffron can be confirmed in a study of a larger number of patients when compared with a control group of infertile men who do not use saffron. This local herb may have a role in the future of modern medicine, but it would be an expensive drug!

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AVICENNA AND HIS MODERN SCIENTIFIC VIEWPOINT

Avicenna, a great Iranian scientist has written the most famous medical book in the history. A thousand years ago, he donated a treasure to the world named *Canon of Medicine*. Dr Madineh, a urologist interested in this book, has selected some chapters of the Canon that are about bladder and its diseases. In his article, he shows the similarities of Avicenna's theories with modern theories. Readers may find it interesting that 10 centuries ago, Avicenna could through away the superstitious beliefs in medicine and substitute them with experimental methodology we believe in now.

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