

IN BRIEF

GERD

Gastric acid inhibitors, such as PPIs and histamine-2 receptor antagonists (H2RAs), can augment the risk of hip fracture in individuals who have at least one additional fracture risk factor, according to the findings of a new case-control study. The study authors assessed prescription data on PPIs and H2RAs for 33,752 patients who had hip/femur fractures and also for 130,471 matched controls. Patients who had fractures were more likely to have previously received at least a 2-year supply of PPIs or H2RAs.

Original article Corley, D. A., Kubo, A., Zhao, W. & Quesenberry, C. Proton pump inhibitors and histamine-2 receptor antagonists are associated with hip fractures among at-risk patients. *Gastroenterology* **139**, 93–101 (2010)

HEPATITIS

The effect of mitoquinone (a mitochondria-targeted antioxidant drug) on serum aminotransferases and HCV RNA levels in patients with chronic HCV infection was studied in a phase II study. 30 patients were randomly assigned to receive mitoquinone 40 mg or 80 mg once daily for 28 days or placebo. There was no change in HCV load, but there was a significant drop in levels of serum alanine aminotransferase and aspartate aminotransferase in both treatment groups, indicating a role for mitoquinone against liver necroinflammation.

Original article Gane, E. J. *et al.* The mitochondria-targeted anti-oxidant mitoquinone decreases liver damage in a phase II study of hepatitis C patients. *Liver Int.* **30**, 1019–1026 (2010)

ENDOSCOPY

ERCP exposes patients to nontrivial doses of radiation, potentially increasing their risk of developing cancer. The dose of radiation received is closely associated with fluoroscopy time. A retrospective analysis of a database with 9,052 entries has now shown that when ERCP is carried out by experienced endoscopists—those with more years of experience performing ERCPs and those performing a higher number of ERCPs in the previous year—the fluoroscopy time is shorter.

Original article Jorgensen, J. E., Rubenstein, J. H., Goodsitt, M. M. & Elta, G. H. Radiation doses to ERCP patients are significantly lower with experienced endoscopists. *Gastrointest. Endosc.* **72**, 58–65 (2010)

GENETICS

A new study has shed light on viral diversity in the human gut. Reyes *et al.* sequenced the viromes of virus-like particles present in fecal samples collected from four sets of healthy female monozygotic twins and their mothers. Unlike fecal bacterial communities, which share a greater degree of similarity in related individuals than in unrelated individuals, the viromes of each individual are unique regardless of relatedness. By contrast, the intrapersonal virome diversity was very low over the 1-year study period.

Original article Reyes, A. *et al.* Viruses in the faecal microbiota of monozygotic twins and their mothers. *Nature* **466**, 334–338 (2010)