

## IN BRIEF

## CONNECTIVE TISSUE DISEASES

A study by Milic *et al.* suggests that a novel scoring system of the parotid and submandibular salivary glands using ultrasound is as reliable as current invasive methods for the diagnosis of Sjögren's syndrome. A cutoff score of 19 out of 48 for the ultrasonographic method resulted in the highest ratio of sensitivity to specificity (87.1% and 90.8%, respectively).

**Original article** Milic, V. D. *et al.* Diagnostic value of salivary gland ultrasonographic scoring system in primary Sjögren's syndrome: a comparison with scintigraphy and biopsy. *J. Rheumatol.* **36**, 1495–1500 (2009).

## SPONDYLOARTHROPATHIES

The beneficial effects of surgery for the treatment of lumbar degenerative spondylolisthesis associated with spinal stenosis have been shown to persist in the long term. Weinstein *et al.* showed that, at 4 years, patients treated with decompressive laminectomy with or without fusion reported greater improvements in bodily pain, physical functioning, and disability than those who received standard, nonoperative care, as measured by the Short-Form 36 questionnaire and Oswestry Disability Index.

**Original article** Weinstein, J. N. *et al.* Surgical compared with nonoperative treatment for lumbar degenerative spondylolisthesis. Four-year results in the Spine Patient Outcomes Research Trial (SPORT) randomized and observational cohorts. *J. Bone Joint Surg. Am.* **91**, 1295–1304 (2009).

## OSTEOIMMUNOLOGY

New research suggests that the phenotypic response of neutrophils to chitosans is distinct from that to proinflammatory agents, and could shed light on the optimal use of chitosans for osteoarthritic cartilage repair. Neutrophils from the blood of healthy donors were attracted to 80%, but not 95%, deacetylated chitosan. Both chitosans, however, were internalized by neutrophils and neither activated granule enzyme release or active oxygen species generation.

**Original article** Simard, P. *et al.* Neutrophils exhibit distinct phenotypes toward chitosans with different degrees of deacetylation: implications for cartilage repair. *Arthritis Res. Ther.* **21**, R74 (2009).

## RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Treatment with the CD147/HAb18 monoclonal antibody, either alone or in combination with tumor necrosis factor blockade, led to reduced metalloproteinase expression and inflammatory cytokine levels in a severe combined immunodeficiency mouse model of rheumatoid arthritis. In addition, mice treated with the monoclonal antibody had less cartilage erosion and synovitis than animals in the control group.

**Original article** Jia, J. *et al.* Inhibitory effect of CD147/HAb18 monoclonal antibody on cartilage erosion and synovitis in the SCID mouse model for rheumatoid arthritis. *Rheumatology (Oxford)* **48**, 721–726 (2009).