



NEWSLETTER

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DEAN'S MESSAGE OF THE MONTH



We are nearly halfway through the semester, the college has been busy and I expect it will continue to be so with many upcoming events and activities planned. Preparations for the 7th Emirati German Congress in Medicine & Dentistry are well underway; I urge you all to attend this important event which is scheduled to be held on the 3rd and 4th of November 2019 on our medical campus in Al Razi Hall. A student poster presentation competition will be held and prizes awarded to the best posters.

I would like to extend my thanks to the doctors and faculty who helped in interviewing the first year medical students. I look forward to following their journey through the years.

A team of delegates from McGill University will be visiting our college on the 12th of November 2019 to meet with prospective students who are interested in applying to do their electives and future medical training in Canada. Our signing of a partnership with McGill University as well as fellowships offered by the Office of the Crown Prince will open the door for applications from our students who are interested in pursuing their postgraduate studies there. I hope this opportunity helps those who wish to continue their training in Canada.



COLLEGE NEWS

Cairo University Visit

A delegation from Cairo University visited the College on the 20th and 21st of October 2019, and met with Prof. Qutayba Hamid. Heading Cairo's delegation was Prof. Hala Salah El Din Talaat, Dean of the College of Medicine as well as Prof. Hisham El Saket, Vice Dean of Community



Affairs and

Dr. Mahmoud El Fiky, Coordinator of International Affairs.



The visit was very productive and led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two colleges. It is hoped that the memorandum will underpin and cultivate further co-operation between the two colleges.

The Chancellor's Meeting for Graduate Studies of Medical & Health Sciences Colleges

On the 18th of September 2019, Prof. Hamid Al-Naimi, Chancellor of the University of Sharjah and Prof. Qutayba Hamid, Vice Chancellor of Medical & Health Sciences Colleges, as well as Mr. Matt Easdown, Vice Chancellor of Financial and Administrative Affairs, attended a meeting with eighty-eight post-graduate students from the Colleges of Medicine and Health Sciences. The meeting gave an opportunity for the postgraduate students to voice their concerns and share their points of view. Prof. Hamid Al-Naimi and Prof. Qutayba Hamid answered the students' questions and concerns about issues pertaining to registration, finance, and scholarships.

Following that, a meeting was arranged on the 2nd of October 2019 with the postgraduate students and their potential supervisors, to match the prospective students' topics of research with the appropriate expert in the field.

ALS Facilitators Workshop

Action Learning is a problem-solving approach where a small group, referred to as an action learning set (ALS), meets to address real-time problems related to the workplace. ALS has been an essential learning method in the Master of Leadership in Health Profession Education (MscLHPE) at the University of Sharjah since its launch in 2013.

On the 23rd of September 2019, the Medical Education Center (MEC) organized a three-hour workshop for the new ALS facilitators; Hiba Rahmet-Allah from the College of Medicine, and Veena Raigangar and Muna Salem Al-Tamimi from the College of Health Sciences. The workshop aimed to train them and standardize their approach in preparation for the new academic year 2019 – 2020.

The Acting Director of the MEC, Dr. Mohamed El-Hassan, gave an overview of the program and welcomed the facilitators, acknowledging their role in assisting the MscLHPE candidates through their second year of the program. This was followed by interactive sessions conducted by three experienced ALS facilitators. The first session was held by Dr. Maha Saber from the Department of Clinical Sciences about the educational benefits and process of ALS, followed by a role-play session facilitated by Dr. Sarra Shorbagi from the department of Family and Community Medicine and Behavioral Sciences. Finally, Dr. Wiam El-Shami,

of the department of Medical Diagnostic Imaging, focused on the challenges facing facilitators and ALS members. The workshop was concluded with an open discussion and exchange of experience amongst the attendees and facilitators.



Cancer Research UK visit to Sharjah

Under the patronage of Prof. Hamid Al-Naimiy, Chancellor of University of Sharjah and Prof. Qutayba Hamid, Vice Chancellor of the Colleges of Medicine and Health Sciences and Dean of College of Medicine, delegates from Cancer Research UK and Francis Crick Institute London visited the University of Sharjah on the 25th of September 2019. Prof. Taleb Al-Tel, Director of Research Institute of Medical and Health Sciences, helped in the organization of this forum, which was attended by a group of experts in cancer research and was held at the College of Medicine, University of Sharjah. Mrs. Sawsan Jafar, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Cancer Patients, welcomed all attendees to this meeting. Prof. Julian Downward gave a talk addressing the outcomes of the Sharjah Research Laboratory - UK. Prof. Azzam Magazachi, Dr. Rifat Hamoudi and Dr. Hany Omar from University of Sharjah shared their latest research in the field. Prof. Julian Downward praised the collaboration between Sharjah and London, lauding the progress made by the UAE in general and the Emirate of Sharjah in particular, in increasing cancer patients' chances of survival and improving their quality of life.



Toronto University Visit

On the 15th of September 2019, distinguished guests from the University of Toronto visited the College of Medicine to meet with students interested in pursuing residency and medical training in Canada. The speakers included Ms. Shannon Spencer, the International Relationship Manager at the University of Toronto and Dr. Salvatore Spadafora, Prof. of Anaesthesia and Vice Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education and Continuous Professional Development at the University of Toronto. They also met with individual students and advised them on what is needed to ensure a successful application.

White Cane Day March

On Saturday 12th October 2019, a group of faculty members and students participated in the International White Cane Day March held on Sharjah Corniche, organized by the Emirates Association



for the Visually Impaired with the help of Dr. Balsam Qubais. This march is held annually to show support for the visually impaired members of the community.



Publications

Congratulations to Dr. Jibran Muhammad, Prof. Azzam Magazachi and Dr. Rifat Hamoudi on the following publications:

Muhammad JS, Jayakumar MN, Elemam NM, Venkat-achalam T, Raju TK, Hamoudi RA, Maghazachi AA. Gasdermin D Hypermethylation Inhibits Pyroptosis And LPS-Induced IL-1 β Release From NK92 Cells. Immunotargets Ther. 2019 Oct 14; 8: 29-41.

The aforementioned research article was published in a high impact journal (Scopus Q1, Citescor/IF:10.5). This article's video abstract can be viewed using this link: <http://youtu.be/ZT7DsG-ng0o>

Early Detection Saves Lives

The Family Health Promotion Center (FHPC) organized a Health Awareness Campaign in Sharjah, on 24th September 2019. The campaign ran from 4 pm to 9 pm as a part of the preventive program 'Itmenan'; one of the cancer screening initiatives launched this year, aiming to raise awareness about the importance of early detection of cancer and other non-communicable diseases.



The campaign was organized by Dr. Azza Khalfan AlKindi, Director of the FHPC in collaboration with Pink Caravan. Dr. Sarra Shorbaji from the Department of Family Medicine & Community and Behavioral Sciences along with fifth year medical students: Omar Nedal, Farah Soukieh, and Malak Agha participated in this campaign.

A multitude of activities aiming to raise awareness of breast and cervical cancer were carried out, targeting those at an increased risk of developing such cancers. The participants were further educated on means of early screening available such as mammograms and Pap smears. Additional screening for hypertension and diabetes was conducted.



Faculty Achievements

A press release from Lund University, Sweden, highlighted a study conducted at the University of Sharjah. The study is a collaboration between the College of Medicine at the University of Sharjah (Dr. Jalal Taneera) and Lund University (Dr. Albert Salehi). The study showed that the activation of GPR183 receptor by a specific metabolite (7 α ,25-dihydroxycholesterol), which is formed in the liver, leads to

increased insulin release. The high insulin level leads to hunger, henceforth weight gain.



On the 21st of October 2019, Dr. Iman Talaat gave a lecture in the Supreme Council of Family Affairs, Sharjah, which aimed to raise awareness about breast cancer as well as the importance of early detection.

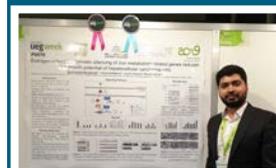
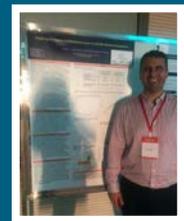
She was also on air on the 22nd of October 2019, helping in raising awareness about breast cancer.



Dr. Jibrán Muhammad received the National Scholars Award from the United European Gastroenterology Association at its yearly congress held in Barcelona, Spain on the 21st of October 2019.

This award is designed to recognize and nurture promising early career scientists for their outstanding research in the field of gastroenterology. The National Scholar Award is based on National Gastroenterology Society affiliation. This is the second time Dr. Jibrán has received this award, with the first being in 2017.

Dr. Mohammad Al Bataineh attended ICG-14 conference in China, from the 24th to the 27th of October 2019 and presented a poster titled 'Human gut microbiota composition and functionality correlation with age'.



Dr. Jibrán Muhammad presented a poster at the United European Gastroenterology Week (UEG Week), from the 19th to the 23rd of October 2019 at Barcelona, Spain. His poster was selected as a poster of excellence and was granted the poster champ award.

CTC NEWS

Transoral Endoscopic Thyroidectomy Vestibular Approach (TOETVA) Cadaveric Hands On Workshop

The University of Sharjah, Sharjah Surgical Institute (SSI) conducted the “Transoral Endoscopic



Thyroidectomy Vestibular Approach (TOETVA) Cadaveric Hands-on Workshop,” in October 2019. This is the first workshop of its kind in the MENA Region. It provided an intensive cadaveric hands-on experience on the up-to-date and novel techniques in thyroid surgery and transoral thyroidectomy.

The course’s faculty and director was Dr. Sadq Ghaleb Kadem, Consultant Laparoscopic Surgeon who shared his expertise about this topic with participants from the UAE, Saudi Arabia & Iraq. Participants left positive feedback about the course and were satisfied with the level of knowledge acquired.

Transanal Endoscopic Surgery Workshop VAAFT Epsit & Teo

The University of Sharjah, Sharjah Surgical Institute (SSI) in collaboration with Karl Storz Endoskope conducted the “Transanal Endoscopic Surgery Workshop VAAFT Epsit & Teo” in October 2019.

The first day of the course consisted of didactic lectures and a hands-on session at CSTC state-of-the-art wet lab. This workshop highlighted new



possibilities in transanal rectal surgery. The second day of the course involved witnessing a live surgery that was carried out in Mediclinic City Hospital in Dubai. Participants were exposed to the newest and latest trends in this field.

The workshop was carried out by Prof. Ahmed Shokry Hafez, Consultant General Surgeon, School of Laparoscopy - Surgical Oncology, Madinat Nasr Hospital, Cairo, Egypt and Dr. Valentina Giaccaglia, Consultant General Surgery, Mediclinic City Hospital, Dubai, UAE.

This workshop was supported by the Training and Compliance Director at KARL STORZ SE & Co.KG, Mr. Johnny Kassab. The aim of such workshops is to expand the network of health care professionals in education and clinical training in order to achieve more

effective patient care and a higher level of patient safety worldwide.



VIRAL NEWS

Outbreak of mysterious vaping-related diseases

As of September 2019, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported over 350 cases of vaping-associated pulmonary illness (VAPI) across 36 states. The observed patterns of disease are variable but all have been associated with recent electronic cigarette use or “vaping.” Vaping is a word used to describe the use of an electronic system to deliver inhaled drugs, most commonly nicotine and cannabinoids (natural or synthetic forms of marijuana). Juuling is another term that is used to describe the use of a specific vape device.

CLINICAL PRESENTATION

To date, the CDC has reported an epidemic of “severe lung disease” caused by vaping. Patients have presented with a range of symptoms, including shortness of breath, fever, cough, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache, dizziness and chest pain following the use of vaping devices. Symptoms typically worsened over a period of days to weeks before patients were seen by a healthcare provider, and were consistent with chemical pneumonitis. Many patients have required hospitalization, and several have required ICU-level care with mechanical ventilation due to severe respiratory failure. As of September 20th 2019, the CDC has confirmed eight deaths attributed to VAPI, and is evaluating over 350 cases.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

The etiology of VAPI is as yet unknown, but it does not appear to be infection-mediated. There are multiple compounds present in vaporized material that could potentially cause injury such as flavourants (e.g. diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease); volatile organic compounds; and heavy metals (e.g. nickel, tin, and lead). The U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products is analyzing product samples from vaping devices across multiple states to identify any potentially harmful constituents that may be triggering the illnesses. VAPI has been reported with a range of vaping devices and liquids; no one specific liquid or device has been identified as the causative agent. VAPI has been reported with nicotine, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) products.

DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH VAPI

The following patterns of lung injury have been reported with VAPI:

- Acute eosinophilic pneumonia/organizing pneumonia
- Lipoid pneumonia
- Acute lung injury and acute respiratory distress syndrome
- Acute and subacute hypersensitivity pneumonitis
- Diffuse alveolar hemorrhage
- Respiratory bronchiolitis-associated pneumonitis



TREATMENT

Based on limited experience to date, treatment with corticosteroids may improve symptoms in some cases. In addition, clinicians should seek to identify other causes of illness (e.g. infections) that may be contributing to the clinical presentation. Clinicians should inquire specifically about e-cigarette use in any patient presenting with acute lung disease. "Until we know more, if you are concerned about specific health risks, CDC recommends you do not use e-cigarettes or vaping products," said CDC principal deputy director Anne Schuchat in a statement to reporters recently.

Adapted from atsjournals.org & popsci.com



STUDENTS' CORNER



"أفلا تعقلون"

By Fatima Al-Khateeb, Year 4

إِذَا مَا لَمْ يُوَدِّكَ الْعِلْمُ خَيْرًا فَخَيْرٌ مِنْهُ أَنْ لَوْ قَدْ جَهَلْتَا

By Hazem Taifour, Year 5



"الحب من شيم الكرام"

By Amna Al-Ani, Year 5



STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS



Medical Students' Association

SOCIAL GATHERING



On the 24th September 2019, the MSA conducted its first event of the year, ‘The Annual Social Gathering’, at the Rove Hotel in Dubai Healthcare City. Students from the pre-clinical and clinical phases were invited to join the fun and socialize with each other, in a relaxed setting outside of university.

The venue offered students with the opportunity to participate in multiple board games along with Jenga and football with table tennis being the tip of the iceberg. During dinner, people sat in small groups from different years as they engaged in light conversation.

This event marked the first of many more to come on the MSA calendar in 2019 - 2020, and the members look forward to the rest with more excitement than before.

DINNER WITH THE DEAN

Good food and cheer were the two main ingredients of the meal enjoyed at the Annual MSA Dinner with the Dean, held on 2nd October, 2019. MSA Board Members, Heads of Committees and the Chairs of the Student Affairs Committee, Dr. Mohammad Al Bataineh and Dr. Hiba Barqawi were in attendance. The dinner was a good opportunity to discuss MSA's potential plans and objectives for the academic year 2019-2020. Common ground was established between faculty and students as they shared interesting anecdotes and personal experiences over mint tea. The evening ended on a high note of excitement for the projects in store.



OLD PEOPLE'S HOME

On the 8th of October 2019, the MSA's community committee organized a visit to the Old People's Home. It began with an introductory tour of the different facilities and services provided by the center which include physiotherapy sessions, dietary consultations, and an in-house pharmacy. Following that, the members were warmly welcomed by the residents of the home. Some shared stories of their own while others eagerly recited few poetic verses. The members distributed dates and took photos to keep this precious day engraved in their memories.



INTERNATIONAL COFFEE DAY



In belated celebration of the International Coffee Day, the MSA distributed coffee to the medical students in M27. The event was held in the lobby on the 9th of October 2019, where coffee was distributed whilst students enjoyed a Fairouz-full morning.

To ensure the satisfaction of all, MSA served karak to cover the tea lovers too. This event appealed to everyone in M27; doctors, staff and students.

Coffee and karak while listening to

Fariouz; a major success!



" Life is short.



Stay awake for it"

BOWLING TRIP

With the unfolding of the new academic year, the MSA board arranged a gathering for the social committee members aiming to break the ice and establish a more relaxed atmosphere. They met up at the Dubai International Bowling Center in Mamzar on the 15th of October 2019. They started off with a friendly match and ended the day with an exciting tournament which they all enjoyed!



EXCELLENCE IN ONCOLOGY CARE CONGRESS 2019

“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”

– Socrates

Imbibing Socrates’ words in spirit, the Medical Students’ Association encouraged students from Year 2, 3 and 4 to participate in the ‘Excellence in Oncology Care Congress’ held from 17th to 19th October 2019 at Intercontinental Festival City, Dubai.



Forty three students from the College of Medicine participated in the congress as delegates in a variety of workshops suiting their interests, covering molecular tumor boards, live oncosurgeries, head and neck tumors sessions, immuno-oncology, breast oncology, lung oncology and imaging, amongst others.

They had the chance to learn from international speakers updating the community on latest medical research in the field of oncology and promoting the newly approved gene-specific drugs in the market. The guest speakers also participated in multiple engaging debates and case discussion panels which highlighted some of the controversies and differences in medical practice across countries.

We hope to participate in many more conferences such as this, in different fields of medicine, to help our members learn, grow, and find their true professional calling along the way.

PSYCHE PROJECT

Mental health is the concern and need of the hour in medical practice. With depression and suicide rates amongst adolescents and young adults on the rise globally, there is increasing responsibility on institutions to create healthy and safe spaces for students to discuss their thoughts on the topic.

With this in mind, the scientific committee launched their year-long undertaking, “Psyche Project”, for which a series of activities have been planned. On the 16th October 2019, the committee started with a round-table session discussing their opinions on what defines mental health for them. They also addressed the common misconceptions of mental health in society, the dismissive attitudes of mental

health practitioners, the economic burden on families and common routes of therapy available.



On the 24th and 25th October 2019, students participated in the International Mental Health Conference, held in Abu Dhabi. They had the opportunity to engage in panel discussions and listen to current industry opinions on management of prevalent mental health disorders.

ندوة فقه التطبب

On the 21st of October 2019, and in partnership with the Al Muntada Al Islami – Sharjah, the MSA organized an awareness event for medical students and doctors. The event consisted of four fifty-minutes lectures each dealing with controversial subjects that are of relevance to the medical profession, from the legality of abortions to genetic and cellular cloning. The speakers were Legal Consultant Zayed Al Shamsi, Sheikh Qais Al-Sheikh Mubarak, an Islamic and senior religious scholar, and Dr Hashim Jameel, a sharia professor and a religious scholar. Students and doctors from all the levels and departments of the college attended, reflecting the huge level of enthusiasm, positive feedback and interest.

الثنين | 2019/10/21

أ. د. قيس آل الشيخ مبارك

عضو هيئة كبار العلماء
المملكة العربية السعودية

المستشار/ زايد الشامسي

رئيس جمعية الحقوقيين

أحكام الاستنساخ الخلوي والرجيني

03:00 - 03:40 مساءً

الأحكام القانونية للإجهاض

03:40 - 04:20 مساءً

استراحة | 4:20 - 4:40

د. هاشم جميل

مفتي بدائرة الشؤون الإسلامية
والأوقاف

أ. د. قيس آل الشيخ مبارك

عضو هيئة كبار العلماء
المملكة العربية السعودية

أحكام جراحات التجميل

04:40 - 05:20 مساءً

الأحكام الشرعية لنقل الأعضاء من الميت إلى الحي

05:20 - 06:00 مساءً



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Research and Development Association

On the 2nd of October 2019, the R&D association, in partnership with the Career Advising and Student Training Office (CASTO), conducted a workshop that encompassed the skills needed to write a professional CV and leave a lasting impression in an interview. Students from different colleges in the medical campus attended the session by Dr. Asmaa Awad. The workshop's success propagated rather quickly amongst the batches. Students from the College of Medicine requested for another workshop that delves more into what residency programs would be looking out for.

Until next time, here is the take home message for those who missed out: "be unique and let your CV speak on your behalf."



TIPS TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW

Most fresh graduates long for a job but worry about job interviews because they don't know how to say, act, or behave. Here are some life hack tips on how to be and feel more prepared for a job interview:

RESEARCH THE COMPANY/INSTITUTION

Do a deep dive into the company; what's their ethos? Do they have an ethos? What is the company all about? Maybe they have a slogan or tagline, find out and learn the history behind it because this will give you some insight into that company and how it operates. Social media is an effective research tool, but make sure you go beyond that and have a good range of sources.

THE INTERVIEWERS

You don't always know who will be interviewing you, but if you do then it makes sense to learn about these people and their role within the company. Will you be working on any key projects with them? Do they have any published work, are they into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)? This will of course depend on the type of role you are interviewing for but showing an understanding for key profiles and their commitment to their company is not only important, it shows initiative.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

Every company has a communication strategy – some more effective than others, but there has to be a way of engaging with the consumer to sell their product or service. You want to learn about how they communicate, so you know how to approach them. This understanding also helps you to give them your personal perspective on their communication tactics and whether you find them engaging, relatable, approachable – would you buy into their offering? This makes a good point for discussion in an interview (and make it constructive feedback as you do want them to hire you after all).

KNOW YOUR ROLE

What do you know about your role? How is your experience relevant? What can you bring to this position? These are all questions you need to ask yourself before your interview, and most importantly, why do you want it? The interview process works both ways – it's for you to find out if this role is for you, and equally for your employers to see if you are the right fit for their company. But ultimately, to excel in a job interview you must want the job, and this has to come across.

COME ARMED WITH RELEVANT QUESTIONS

Interviews are not all about having the answers, they're very much about having the questions too. Show inquisitiveness, insight and a genuine interest in the company with the questions that you ask – questions that will demonstrate that you care about how you perform, progress and add value to the company, and equally, how this role will add value to you as an employee. At the end of the day, a job is much more than a CV and a cover letter – it's about the culture, the people, the drive, the work-life balance, financial expectations, short and long-term goals. The list goes on, but you need to know what your priorities are as these will be your motivating factors.

Source: moderneast.com



Peer Advisory Committee

New members

With great pride, PAC welcomes its new members to the family. Choosing the newcomers was a very challenging task to accomplish, but we're confident that the new members will have a positive influence on their juniors and stand out as idols. We hope PAC becomes a platform for them to further enhance and facilitate their abilities to guide fellow students.



MEDICAL SCHOOL LIFE HACKS

So you want to be a medical school superstar? Top grades, 'Doctor on Board' sticker on your car? Try these med school study tips, curated from the best recommendations and online advice:

FOCUS

Turn off your phone, block pesky websites. Clear your desktop, both physical and virtual, and isolate yourself from distractions, human and inanimate objects alike. It may feel stark and a bit lonely, but this is protection for when your mind inevitably wanders.

PLAN TIME BLOCKS AND BREAKS

There is a lot of material, and no time to realize you just wasted an entire afternoon poring over obscure clinical research on Chinese laparoscopic surgery outcomes. This is where time-blocking trumps simple to-do lists; you need to know when to start and stop doing things. Schedule breaks so you do not get fried, and you will have something to look forward to without guilt.

CHUNK THINGS DOWN AND START EARLY AND OFTEN

Huge blocks of time are a luxury, so try reviewing notes during those little chunks of time you have during the day. Waiting in line for your sandwich? Whip out some Netter's flashcards and get that complicated hand musculature down. Have an awkward 20 minutes between class and a meeting? Review that day's lecture. Doing this early and often will have the wondrous effects of spaced learning.

HUMAN RESOURCES: OLDER STUDENTS & PROFESSORS

Who better to ask for advice than people who have already survived it? This was the idea behind PAC: For you to pick the brains of older students on what the best resources and study methods are, and what to focus on. You can also address any content questions to professors, observing closely what they emphasize. Then give yourself a pat on the back when they write test questions on those things.

GROUP STUDY WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

This point may be slightly contentious, but I find that group study too early can do more harm than good. You need to put in those hours, holed away in some Starbucks, to really take your own first stab at the material. Other students are great for quizzing each other on material that has already been reviewed, but being a groupie too early on can lead to insecurity or worse, a false sense of security.

CREATIVE TENACITY

Medical school is unlike any other academic undertaking, and the 6 years in itself is its own learning process. Be flexible and cognizant when things are not working, and realize there will always be a solution as long as you keep looking. Not getting something? Tap into the vast array of books, study guides, YouTube videos, other schools' resources and your peers for help.

Adapted from picmonic.com

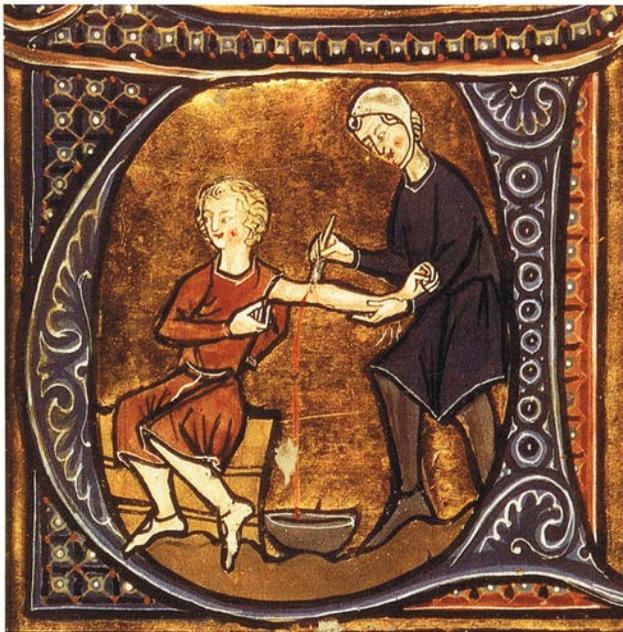
MEDICAL MISHAPS

By: Drishti Kampani

The History of Wonder Drugs

How did doctors of 800 AD predict the death of a patient? They wiped the sick person with a lump of lard and then threw it to a dog in an unfamiliar neighbourhood (or an unfamiliar dog). If the dog ate the lard, then the person would survive.

Bizarre, unfounded, yet very common practice back in the hay day. Aside from being humorous and silly, this story raises an important question - Have doctors always been the altruistic messiahs of mankind that we are led to believe, or is there evidence suggesting otherwise? In this essay, we explore the fallacies of some of the common medications prescribed by our forefathers.



Ancient Chinese and Indian medicine regarded mercury as the miracle drug; an elixir to promote health and cure nearly every disease: to treat inflammation in the nose and throat; corneal stains; ulcers and warts; against diarrhoea and vomiting; for liver and lung diseases and most notably, against syphilis. The physicians of the first emperor of unified China, Qin Shi Huang, prescribed mercury pills promising him an eternal life. Concerns that the prescription was having ill effects on the emperor's health and sanity were waved off by the imperial physicians, who listed the emperor's conditions (including itching, fornication, swelling, and muscle weakness), today recognized as signs and symptoms of mercury poisoning, as evidence that the elixir was effectively treating the emperor's latent ailments. Now we know better and consider mercury intoxication as a life-threatening emergency.

Women were not spared from the ignorance of medieval physicians either. European prescriptions for abortion included a paste of crushed ants, the saliva of camels and tail hairs of black-tailed deer dissolved in the fat of bears. Pennyroyal oil - known to cause syncope, seizures, coma, cardiopulmonary collapse, acute liver injury, renal insufficiency and multiorgan failure – was prescribed to abort the fetus. Little did the physicians acknowledge that the medication would abort the life of the woman as well.

One may argue that medieval physicians were trying their best with whatever few resources and research they had at hand. However, reckless prescriptions and capitalism were a disease plaguing doctors of the 19th and 20th centuries as well.

Morphine, cocaine and heroin were standard first-line therapy for a wide range of diseases. They were marketed as the treatment for everything under the sun – toothaches, depression, sinusitis, lethargy, headaches and sleeplessness. With enthusiasm, it was also prescribed to teething children suffering from cough and cold. In 1902, there were an estimated 200,000 cocaine addicts in the United States alone.

Preventive medicine wasn't left alone either. Diet pills had been the growing trend since the 1880s, but the big bad wolf in sheep's clothing was Fen-Phen (appetite suppressant Fenfluramine and amphetamine Phenteramine) from the 1990s. Dr. Weintraub apparently performed a single study with a mere 121 patients showing no adverse events caused by the drugs. What was left ignored was that the drug caused severe heart valve abnormalities. Fen-Phen became so popular that nearly 6 million Americans were hooked onto it. The Food and Drug Administration approved the drug in 1996 but then had to retract their approval due to the truth finally coming to light.

Is the situation the same today? Thankfully, not. Doctors are becoming increasingly reliant on evidence-based medicine, and drug approvals are only granted after multiple levels of rigorous, controlled clinical trials. The safety profile of the drug being prescribed is of utmost concern to the doctors and the disadvantages of polypharmacy are gaining increasing traction. However, it would be too early to begin the congratulatory party. A lot of work is yet to be done.

Mental health is one such field requiring attention. There has been a sharp increase in the prescription of anti-depressants and anti-psychotics to children and adolescents around the world as first line therapy, despite limited efficacy. Most of the behavioral issues observed in children of their age group can be easily addressed by cognitive behavioral therapy and psychoeducation; yet most practitioners choose the road plagued with adverse events and roadblocks. Similarly, chemotherapy and immunotherapy used in patients with metastatic cancer are mostly experimentation at the level of clinical trials, serving little to reduced benefit to the patients themselves. How many patients will continue to be the victims of doctor's recklessness, and how many of them will merely serve as sacrifice in the name of research and the greater good?

In light of our embarrassing history, it is safe to say that Voltaire, the French satirist, wasn't joking when he said "Doctors are men who prescribe medicines of which they know little, to cure diseases of which they know less, in human beings of whom they know nothing."



RECOMMENDATIONS

By: Dua'a AlNusairat

Movie of the month

Joker – 2019

Why is it recommended that you watch this movie?

By Josh Brolin

"To appreciate "Joker" I believe you have to have either gone through something traumatic in your life, which I believe most of us have, or understand somewhere in your psyche what true compassion is that



which usually stems from having gone through something traumatic, unfortunately.

An example of dangerous compassion would be to, say, make a film made about the fragility of the human psyche, and make it so raw, so brutal, so balletic that by the time you leave the theatre you don't only want to hurt anything but you desperately want an answer and a solution to the violence and mental health issues that spun out of control around us. This film makes you hurt and only in pain do we ever want to change.

It's all in the irony of trauma – a fine line between the resentment of wanting to hurt society back for raping you of a decent life, for not protecting you and accepting what feels like alien feelings with softening to those others who seem freakish in our era of judgement, and digital damnation.

Like kids in Middle School: man, they can just be mean. For no reason. Sometimes, those awful little kids breed an evil in someone that rages much later, that rages when everyone pretends we are all back to normal, when we all thought it had just manned up and gone away.

We have a habit of hating, dividing, ostracizing and sweeping our problems under the rug. Joker is simply lifting the rug and looking underneath it."

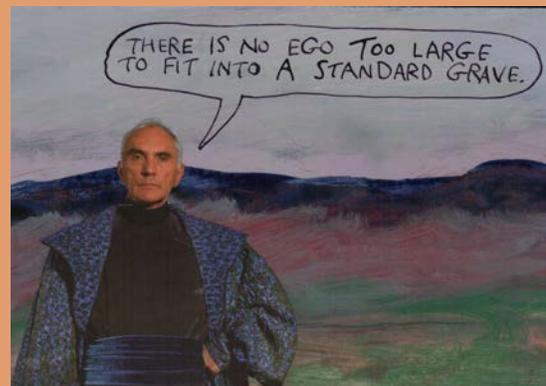
Hadith of the month:

About Gratitude

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِي بَيْتِهِ مُعَافَى فِي جَسَدِهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوَّةٌ يَوْمَهُ فَكَأَنَّمَا حَبِزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Whosoever begins the day feeling family security and good health; and possessing provision for his day is as though he possessed the whole world."

Picture of the month



By Michael Lipsey



For any comments regarding this newsletter or suggestions for improvement, you can reach us at:
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DOCTOR'S ORDERS - DR. SARRA SHORBAGI

Give Blood, Save Lives

Thinking about donating blood? Here are some facts:

A single blood donation can save up to three lives. Blood can be separated into three components: red blood cells, plasma, and platelets; which can contribute to the recovery of three different people.

Trauma victims may need up to 50 units of blood, heart surgery patients may need 7 units, a marrow transplant recipient needs up to 45 units, and sickle cell anemia patients need 2 – 10 units per treatment.

What are the types of donations available, and how long does it take to give blood?

- 💧 Whole blood donation: 50-60 minutes
- 💧 Double red cell donation: 60 to 70 minutes
- 💧 Platelet apheresis donation: 60-80 minutes

Who can donate?

- 💧 Any healthy adult aged 18 – 65 who weighs at least 50 kg.

Who cannot donate?

- 💧 People that have had recent surgery or are taking certain medications
- 💧 Anyone with a chronic medical condition or an infectious disease
- 💧 Women who are pregnant or have given birth in the past few months

What are the benefits to the donor?

Donating blood can lower the risk of heart diseases and stroke, prevent iron accumulation, and stimulate the bone marrow to produce new blood cells.

How much blood is taken when you donate?

One unit of blood, which is approximately 450 mL or a tenth of total blood, is collected with each donation. Plasma is replaced within 24 hours and red blood cells need up to 6 weeks for complete replacement.

How often can you donate?

Whole blood can be donated every 2-3 months.

What should you do after donating blood?

- 💧 Drink plenty of fluids for the next 24 hours
- 💧 Be careful not to lift heavy objects
- 💧 Do not smoke for six hours
- 💧 Avoid high places, as you may feel dizzy



References:

- Dubai Health Authority.(2019). Retrieved from www.dha.gov.ae
SEHA. Retrieved from www.seha.ae/
Life Stream Blood Bank. Retrieved from www.lstream.org