

In This Issue...

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► **MEDICAL SCIENTIFIC REVIEW:**

Neurotoxicity and Mechanism of Toluene Abuse (p.150)

The term "drug abuse" usually conjures up images of heroin or crack cocaine addicts, but an equally important class of abused "drugs" is inhalants such as toluene. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse web site, inhalants are the fourth most commonly abused drugs among high school students (after alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana) with about 15 to 20% of students reporting that they have tried inhalants at least once and 2 to 5% reporting have used in the past month. Despite their broad use as drugs of abuse, little is known about the exact mechanism of action. Daniel Eisenberg reviews the literature on the neurotoxicity of toluene, one of the most widely abused inhalants. The effect of toluene on key neurotransmitter systems is discussed in a balanced overview of this exciting field.

► **SCIENTIFIC REVIEW:**

The Role of P-glycoprotein in the Blood-Brain Barrier (p.160)

Originally discovered as a large glycoprotein that was associated with drug resistance of tumor cells, P-glycoprotein has been found in numerous cell types where it plays many essential biological roles. Pankajavalli Ramakrishnan reviews the important function of P-glycoprotein in transporting lipophilic molecules out of the brain, which is a key component of the blood brain barrier.

► **MEDICAL RESEARCH REPORT:**

Clinical and Epidemiological Aspects of HIV Infection at a Rural Hospital in Northern India (p.166)

The spread of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in many parts of the world is a growing concern. Ann Miller documents the rate of HIV infection in 2001 at a small hospital in India and also describes the typical care given to HIV patients at this hospital. Discussion of the community's awareness of HIV and the efforts of the hospital to improve their awareness make this a must-read article for anyone planning a senior international medicine elective in a developing country.

► **MEDICAL RESEARCH REPORT:**

Use of Anti-inflammatory Medications by Urban Adolescents with Asthma (p.173)

Although the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has issued guidelines recommending the use of anti-inflammatory medications for all patients with persistent asthma symptoms, not all physicians agree with these guidelines for a variety of reasons. Ferrell Motlow and Philip Ozuah report on the use of anti-inflammatory medications among adolescents in a Bronx High School.

► **ABSTRACTS:**

The Sixth Annual Julius Marmur Symposium (p.176)

For those who missed the symposium and/or the poster session from this annual event, the abstracts provide a snapshot of the numerous research projects performed by Graduate Students at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

► **BOOK REVIEW:**

The Color Code: A Revolutionary Eating Plan for Optimum Health (p.189)

Most people only use the color of food to decide whether something has spoiled and do not attempt to mix foods based on appearance (except perhaps for gourmet cooks, but this is purely aesthetic). Eliezer Schnall reviews a book by James Joseph, Daniel Nadeau, and Anne Underwood that describes their radical idea of eating a diet balanced in color. While it is not clear if this diet really has the health advantages claimed by the authors, it should at least get people to eat more fruits and vegetables, and this does have documented health benefits.

► **HUMOR:**

'Twas the Night Before the Qualifying Exam Deadline (p.191)

► **IN MEMORIAM**

Raymond Chiu (1972-2003) (p.92)

Raymond Chiu, a remarkable member of the Einstein community, passed away in August. Dennis Shields, Raymond's thesis advisor, remembers Raymond's life and career, while Zachary Freyberg and Daniel Cousin mourn the loss of their friend. In addition, the cover of this issue is dedicated to Raymond.