A brief digest of the December issue

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In the December issue:

### Perspectives

**Disease definition**

Gluckman describes the difficulties in describing disease populations during our evolving understanding of diseases. *(pp 1053–4)*

**Varicella**

Roderick, Ramanan and Finn look at the evidence for universal varicella vaccination in the UK. *(pp 1051–2)*

### Leading articles

**MMR**

Elliman and Bedford review the negative impact of poor MMR uptake on the campaign to eliminate measles. *(pp 1055–7)*

**Chronic fatigue**

Crawley and Davey-Smith review the evidence for the heritability of chronic fatigue. *(pp 1058–61)*

### Original research

**Obesity**

When different definitions of the metabolic syndrome are used, strikingly different prevalences are found in the same population. *(pp 1067–72)*

**Asthma and diabetes**

Structured interviews with young people in England reveal a number of difficulties in accessing medicines at school. *(pp 1077–81)*

**Asthma**

In a questionnaire study of children from ethnic backgrounds in London, cultural perspectives had an impact on family understanding of asthma. *(pp 1082–7)*

**Vitamin D deficiency**

Of 232 children of Eastern African origin attending an immigrant health clinic in Melbourne, Australia, 87% were vitamin D insufficient and 44% were vitamin D deficient. *(pp 1088–93)*

**Child protection**

A systematic review of the literature presents conclusions around oral injuries, and notes that isolated torn frenulum is not pathognomonic of abuse. *(pp 1113–7)*

**Abdominal pain**

In a prospective study of 1411 young people aged 11 to 14, 22% developed abdominal pain at one year, which persisted to 4 years, with previous somatic symptom reporting being a predictor. *(pp 1094–8)*

**Visual impairment**

Over the period 1984 to 1998 there has been a fall in visual impairment in the UK, particularly in children who were born very preterm. However, there remain multiple causes of visual impairment. *(pp 1099–104)*

**Immunisation related pain**

In a randomised controlled trial of 113 infants receiving DPTaP-Hib aged 4 to 6 months, those immunised with a rapid injection and no prior aspiration had less pain than those immunised with a traditional slower technique, as assessed by pain scores and time spent crying. *(pp 1105–8)*

**Isolated raised aminotransferases**

In a series of 72 infants investigated and followed because of raised isolated aminotransferases, no further causes were found after baseline investigation and most resolved spontaneously after a year. *(pp 1109–112)*

**Varicella**

A BPSU survey of serious complications of chickenpox revealed a variety of complications in 0.82/100 000 children per year, mostly in previously healthy children. *(pp 1062–6)*

**Pneumococcal carriage**

Of 232 well children aged 6 months to 5 years attending day care centres in London, 120 (51%) had pneumococcal carriage as determined by nasal swabs. *(pp 1073–6)*

### Short report

**Smoking cessation**

Of 418 parents attending a Children’s hospital in Aberdeen, 27% were smokers, of whom 81% were considering giving up smoking. *(pp 1118–9)*