

MedWire

It has been shown that an extract found in the **bright yellow curry spice turmeric** can kill off cancer cells. The chemical curcumin has long been thought to have healing powers and is already being tested as a treatment for arthritis and even dementia.



treatment needed to prevent them from having further bone fractures in the future.

Smoking during pregnancy can significantly increase the risk of having a child with behavioural problems. Studies have shown that this behavior can be apparent as early as three years old.

A gene can explain why some women find it more difficult to stop smoking during pregnancy. In a study of 2,500 women who smoked before becoming pregnant, the "addictive gene" was associated with a lower chance of quitting once pregnant.

A recently released report from the *Montreal Gazette* calls for an **overhaul of the way in which academic research is conducted** in Canada. The report specifically suggested for the appointment of an ombudsman, a trusted intermediary, to oversee everything. The report was well underway when a story was released in the Toronto Star last summer about the use of ghostwriters by a McGill University professor for an academic article about hormone replacement therapy.



cause individuals with a false positive result to undergo unnecessary therapies with side effects such as impotence, incontinence and even death.

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine have stumbled upon a **link between medication for gonorrhoea that was used in the 1930s and its positive effect in helping to fight cancer.** The drug, named acriflavine, has the ability to halt the growth of new blood vessels. How effective is the drug? Results from preliminary trials showed genetically engineered mice, if treated with daily injections of acriflavine did not develop tumours.

Scientists claim a new drug has been developed which **kills leukemia cells.** Researchers say the drug, PBOX-15, can destroy cancerous cells in adult patients who have not responded to other treatments.

Feeling grumpy 'is good for you': an Australian psychology expert has found that **being grumpy makes you think more clearly.** His experiments have shown that miserable people are better at making decisions and are less gullible.

Research suggests eating a **diet high in processed food** increases ones chance of being depressed. On the other hand, people who had diets that contained high levels of fresh fruit, vegetables and fish lowered their risk of depression.

Women not getting bone treatment: Studies at Cambridge University suggest that **women who have had a fracture** are not getting the

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The use of **aspirin to protect against cardiovascular disease** should be abandoned. New research has found that the drug can cause serious internal bleeding and does not prevent cardiovascular disease deaths.



Researchers at North Carolina and Boston universities have used the most unlikely of subjects, **drunken fruit flies,** in order to identify networks of genes that play an important role in alcohol drinking behaviour. These scientists hope that these networks, also present in humans, will play as a potential drug target in treating alcoholism.

Two large, independent epidemiologic studies recently completed suggest that prostate-specific antigen (PSA), the current gold standard for prostate cancer screening, may be doing more harm than good. The studies suggest that the sensitivity of the test may

Tel Aviv University researchers are looking for the so-called "**Prozac gene,**" in order to elucidate why there is such a broad range of reaction to Prozac and other antidepressants. If successful, their research may be able to provide health care professionals with a simple genetic test that will revolutionize the treatment of depression.

A team of Alabama researchers claim that they have found the **Achilles' heel for each and every strain of the flu.** Found in many vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and even tea, antioxidants may be the key to providing an additional

method, alongside vaccines, for the prevention and treatment of any flu, including the H1N1.

In a study from the Tufts University School of Medicine, it was found that participation in **Tai Chi (Chuan) exercises caused a reduction of pain** and improvement of physical movement in older patients with osteoarthritis (OA).

Doctors from Oxford University in the UK have attested that **memory and language tests** can be the key for reliably revealing early stages of dementia. This crucial finding allows for initiation of treatment earlier, which has shown to be much more effective in treating dementia.

In a pilot study consisting of only two patients, researchers from France used a combination of gene and **stem cell therapy to treat adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD)**, a disease in which sufferers lose their myelin sheath. For two years, patients were given hematopoietic stem cells that were gene-corrected by an HIV-derived lentiviral vector.



Scientists have shown that **small metal particles have the ability to induce DNA changes** across a cellular barrier without entering the cell itself. This elucidated the risk of wearing metal devices such as artificial hips or knees, but represents promise for future therapies using metal.

When do children develop accents from the place they were born? A recent study showed that babies can learn to **imitate their mother tongue at three days old**, suggesting this process may begin when they are in the womb.

A new Brandeis University study of twins confirms the importance of **genetic factors in age-associated hearing loss**. The research, in the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, examined how genetic and environmental factors (such as harmful noise and medications with detrimental side effects) affect hearing loss in the frequency range of speech recognition.

Researchers are working on a **breakthrough in artificial limb technology**—a prosthetic hand that can actually feel. The SmartHand project is funded by the European Union and is a collaboration between researchers from across the continent. It has produced motorized prosthetic hand that gives unprecedented sensory feedback.

Sugar may give you wrinkles via a process called glycation, in which excess blood sugar binds to collagen in the skin, making it less elastic. Thus, cutting back on sugar may help your skin retain its flexibility.

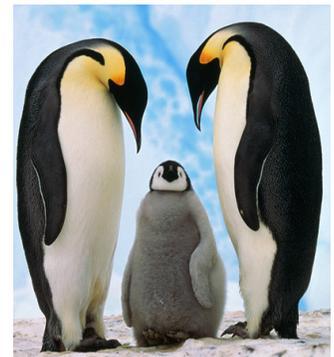
A study published in *Human Reproduction* has found that **bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical commonly found in plastics, is linked to impotence**. Scientists found that male Chinese factory workers who were exposed to high levels of BPA on the job were four times as likely to suffer from erectile dysfunction and seven times as likely to have difficulty with ejaculation, compared to similar Chinese factory workers not exposed to BPA.

Researchers at the University of California at Berkeley are developing the CellScope, a **microscope that attaches to a camera-equipped cell phone**. The CellScope can snap magnified pictures of disease samples and transmit them to medical labs across the country or around the world. The goal is to use mobile communications networks as a cost-effective way for medical personnel to screen for hematologic and infectious diseases in areas that lack access to advanced microscopic equipment.

Penguins that died 44,000 years ago in Antarctica have provided **extraordinary frozen DNA samples** that challenge the accuracy of traditional genetic aging measurements, and suggest those approaches have been routinely underestimating the age of many specimens by 200 to 600 percent.

A new study carried out at the University of Haifa has found that the **hormone oxytocin, the “love hormone,”** which affects behaviors such as trust, empathy and generosity, also affects opposite behaviors, such as jealousy and gloating.

Depression occurs in as many as one-third of patients after a stroke, and women are at somewhat higher risk than men, according to a large new review of studies. **Post-stroke depression is associated with greater disability**, reduced quality of life and an increased risk of death.



A new study in the journal *Sleep* shows that **retirement is followed by a sharp decrease in the prevalence of sleep disturbances**. Findings suggest that this general improvement in sleep is likely to result from the removal of work-related demands and stress rather than from actual health benefits of retirement.



In a pilot study undertaken at Boston University, it was found that **yoga was able to improve lower back pain** in minorities more than a standard treatment consisting of medication and visits to the doctor.