

Selected news items and updates for the practicing clinician

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- If primary care physicians are trained appropriately they can identify and treat obstructive sleep apnea as well as sleep specialists using a sleep lab and for a substantially lower cost. This is according to a recent **publication from JAMA**. See a review **here**.
- This flu season seems to have confused **Google's flu tracker** algorithms. The search company has been predicting flu trends in the US since 2008 and has been as accurate as the CDC's own data and also a few days faster, until this season. Google tracks the number of flu-related searches it processes and uses models to predict flu activity. Click **here** for an overview from Nature.
- Overall hospital-associated infections increased in 2011 but the totals were less than what the **CDC** predicted. Catheter-related blood stream infections in particular had a drop of 41% compared to CDC expectations. **Click** here for a news story.
- "Cryptogenic stroke" may often be stroke events related to silent atrial fibrillation according to results from the **EMBRACE trial** and reported at the International Stroke Conference in February. Only 3% of patients had atrial fibrillation on a 24-hour Holter but 16% were found to have the arrhythmia after wearing a monitor for 30 days. Click **here** for more.
- The **graphic images** that were planned for placement on all cigarette packs will not be implemented. Last year a federal judge ruled that the images violated the tobacco companies' First Amendment rights and a 3-judge appeals court later upheld the decision 2 to 1. The **FDA announced** in March 2013 that they would not pursue the issue any further at this time.

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