

EDITORIAL

The prevalence of autism world-wide is estimated to be between 1 per 91-110 children. While the awareness in the USA and many other developed countries is relatively high and increasing, the availability of information on this condition in Nigeria among the public and the medical community is sparse. This review paper on autism by Dr Frank-Briggs highlights the clinical features and management of autism. It also discusses the current challenges of autism and its management. It recommends that creating awareness and improving skills in its diagnosis and optimal management of autism will promote better outcome in affected children in Nigeria.

The establishment of stroke units has been found to improve the survival of patients and significantly reduce disability by rendering holistic care. Drs Bell-Gam et al in this review paper discuss the role and feasibility of implementing stroke care in specialized stroke units (SSUs) in Nigeria. They observe that there is overwhelming evidence on the need for change from the usual care of stroke patient's in general medical wards to specialized stroke units and that the establishment of such units in Nigeria is feasible. They advocate a strategy of having specific designated beds in a section of the medical wards with the care assigned to specially trained medical and allied health providers as an initial approach.

Chlamydia trachomatis infection, being largely asymptomatic, is difficult to diagnose using the common diagnostic methods which have varying degrees of sensitivity and specificity. Therefore there is a paucity of data on the prevalence of Chlamydia trachomatis infection in Nigeria. This is due to the asymptomatic presentation and the difficulty with diagnosis using the common diagnostic methods which have varying degrees of sensitivity and specificity. It is on this background that Wariso et al, aim to determine the prevalence of and predictive risk factors for Chlamydia trachomatis infection among female undergraduate students of the University of Port Harcourt. They report a prevalence rate of 11% and advocate for a national policy on routine screening for and treatment of Chlamydia trachomatis in order to prevent the complications associated with delayed diagnosis and treatment.

Longstanding and diverse body of evidence supports the view that sex steroids play a role in the development of prostate cancer. Epidemiological and demographic studies in humans as well as animal experiments have sort to determine the independent effect on risk as well as the interrelationship between these hormones. Etawo et al, in this study, investigated the variations in testosterone and oestradiol levels among prostate

cancer patients attending UPTH clinics with the objective of determining the role played by sex hormone variations in the development of cancer of prostate. Their result indicates that increased levels of testosterone in circulation are associated with risk of prostate cancer. This risk is further associated with low levels of circulating oestradiol with the relative levels or ratio of these hormones being an important index.

Caesarean section (CS) is a common surgical procedure performed in women of reproductive age. The numerous indications for a CS may be due to foetal or maternal problems. Though it is a life saving procedure, it also carries a higher morbidity and mortality than vagina delivery. The results of a retrospective study by Dr Buowari, conducted from January 2005 to December 2006 at a secondary health facility located in a rural setting in Northern Nigeria on the indications and outcomes of CS is presented. She reports that the lack of utilization of antenatal care services present in the locality and late presentation are some of the risks of maternal mortality and poor foetal outcome and recommends that the populace needs to be educated on the importance of antenatal care.

Many cases of sudden unexpected natural deaths occur in individuals without known medical diseases. Relatives of such victims and the law enforcement agents often designate those as sudden and unnatural deaths (SUD), and call for coroners inquests. Drs Obiorah and Amakiri, retrospectively evaluate the causes of sudden natural deaths using a nine-year retrospective study carried out in BMSH Port Harcourt, Nigeria. They observe that cardiovascular system pathologies especially hypertensive heart disease remain the leading cause of sudden natural deaths in this study.

Although HIV-1 infection predisposes an individual to well defined neoplasia, neurofibromas have not been reported as some of the typical ones. The association between HIV-1 infection and neurofibromatosis type 1, a genetic disorder, should be of interest because HIV infection could alter the natural biology of its cutaneous manifestations. However, reports on simultaneous occurrence of these conditions in an individual are rare. Drs Isa et al, present the case report of a 30 year old HIV positive woman with florid cutaneous lesions of familial neurofibromatosis type 1 who had adequate response to antiretroviral therapy and conclude that HIV infection and treatment did not seem to affect the clinico-pathological features of the neurofibromatosis lesions.

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