

Last Week In Science-Based Medicine

Written by Dr. Harriet Hall
Monday, 18 March 2013 09:00

Here is a recap of the stories that appeared last week at [Science-Based Medicine](#), a multi-author skeptical blog that separates the science from the woo-woo in medicine.

Three myths about Stanislaw Burzynski and The Skeptics (David Gorski) <http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/index.php/three-myths-about-stanislaw-burzynski-and-the-skeptics/>

Supporters of Burzynski, the “antineoplaston” cancer doctor, are spreading myths. Three of the most flagrant ones: (1) a cabal of skeptics are conspiring to terrorize cancer patients and feed them misinformation, (2) Burzynski is a pioneer of gene-targeted cancer therapy, and (3) Eric Merola (who made the 2 movies about Burzynski) is an objective reporter with no agenda. Dr. Gorski sets the record straight

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Smoking: The Good News and the Bad News (Harriet Hall) <http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/index.php/smoking-the-good-news-and-the-bad-news/>

Two recent review studies have confirmed what we already knew about the dangers of smoking, the leading preventable cause of death. The bad news: smoking reduces life expectancy by 10 years. The good news: stopping by age 40 can restore 9 of those years. Stopping at any age improves life expectancy, but the benefits decrease as age increases.

Clinical Decision-Making: Part II (Steven Novella) <http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/index.php/clinical-decision-making-part-ii/>

Dr. Novella’s series on clinical decision-making continues with a review of the factors that doctors consider when deciding what tests to order for two different purposes: screening and diagnosis.

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Burzynski: Cancer Is A Serious Business, Part 2 : Like the first Burzynski movie, only more so? (David Gorski) <http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/index.php/burzynski-cancer-is-a-serious-business-part-2-like-the-first-burzynski-movie-only-more-so/>

The second Burzynski movie was screened at a film festival; skeptics who attended have reported back. The filmmaker, Merola, offers myths, misinformation, and vicious attacks on Burzynski's critics. He is manipulative and deceptive, presenting only information that supports his True Belief. The film is more like advertising than an objective documentary.

Anti-inflammatory drugs: A closer look at the risks (Scott Gavura) <http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/index.php/anti-inflammatory-drugs-a-closer-look-at-the-risks/>

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) all carry risks, but some are worse than others. Rather than following the evidence and sticking to the safer ones like naproxen and ibuprofen, clinicians continue to prescribe more hazardous ones like diclofenac, which probably shouldn't even remain on the market. The gap between evidence and practice likely results in thousands of avoidable deaths each year.