Science and Clinical Potpourri for Your Life and Your Practice

Consequences of E-Cigarette Use Ill-Defined
Adults join kids in e-cigarette use. Journal of the American Medical Association. Available at: http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2536646?resultClick=1

The most recent available data assessed by investigators at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the 2014 National Health Interview Survey, reveals that an estimated 5.5 million Americans used electronic cigarettes in 2014. Users are most often white men aged 18 to 24 years, with annual family income below $35,000, and without health insurance. Interestingly, adults who are already users of tobacco products are often drawn to e-cigarettes. We frequently encounter electronic cigarette users in our practices, yet the consequences of their use are still ill-defined and await additional investigation.

Nature of Skin Preparation Has a Role in Surgical Site Infection

For the first time in 10 years the US death rate increased, even after statistically controlling for the “graying” (aging) of the population. The increase is largely due to deaths related to Alzheimer disease, drug overdoses, liver disease, accidental injuries, firearms, and suicides. The 2015 reported rate was 730 deaths per 100,000 Americans compared with 723 per 100,000 in 2014. Interestingly, deaths due to heart disease, which had decreased somewhat in recent yearly assessments, plateaued, whereas deaths due to both cancer and human immunodeficiency virus decreased. The investigators cautioned that this is just a snapshot of mortality and that although there was no particular “smoking gun,” future assessments will facilitate putting this into perspective.

Strategies Needed to Reduce Pain Treatment Disparities

Investigators at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing carefully analyzed 20 years of research work that compared the analgesic regimens for pain between white and minority group patients. The authors found that there is a strong research basis supporting the observation that nurse anesthetists are ideally poised to spread the word about skin preparation and perhaps urge the more widespread use of the chlorhexidine-alcohol preparation based on the evidence at hand.