



- FROM THE EDITOR**
- 894 **Signing off after two decades at the helm**  
*D J Ncayiyana*
- 895 **EDITOR'S CHOICE**
- CORRESPONDENCE**
- 896 **Professor Cyril Karabus**  
*M Grootboom, M Sonderup, P Ramathuba*
- 896 **Lack of communication kills: Botched circumcisions in the Eastern Cape**  
*L Nchabeleng, Z Ngubane, R Rampersad*
- 897 **Sun protection factor of South African-tested sunscreens**  
*B Summers*
- 897 **Speaking freely about our private health system**  
*E P Frohlich*
- 898 **CORRECTIONS**
- IZINDABA**
- 899 **RWOPS abuse – Government's had enough**
- 902 **Pink – the colour of hope for uninsured women**
- 904 **NHI will put GPs 'back at the centre' – Motsoaledi**
- 906 **Indians have narrower blood vessels – international expert**
- 907 **HMPG's long-time torch bearers sally forth**
- OBITUARY**
- 908 **I N 'Solly' Marks**
- SAMJ FORUM**
- ISSUES IN MEDICINE**
- 909 **Moral perspectives on stimulant use by healthy students**  
*C Verster, A A van Niekerk*
- 912 **Herbal medicine, randomised controlled trials and global core competencies**  
*N Siegfried, G Hughes*
- EDITORIAL**
- 914 **Phased implementation of screening for cryptococcal disease in South Africa**  
*N P Govender, V Chetty, M Roy, T Chiller, S Oladoyinbo, T Maotoe, W S Stevens, Z Pinini, D Spencer, W D F Venter, W Jassat, D Cameron, G Meintjes, T Mbengashe, Y Pillay*
- RESEARCH**
- 918 **Gender differences in public perceptions on National Health Insurance**  
*M Evans, O Shisana*
- 925 **Rapidly progressive post-transplant lymphoproliferative disease following withdrawal of sirolimus**  
*M Mendelson, Z Barday, R Eastman, D Le Feuvre, S Candy, H Wu, C Swanepoel*
- 927 **Avoid adding insult to injury – correct management of sick female endurance athletes**  
*T Hew-Butler, J Boulter, R Bhorat, T D Noakes*



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- 931 **Timing of antiretroviral therapy initiation in adults with HIV-associated tuberculosis: Outcomes of therapy in an urban hospital in KwaZulu-Natal**  
*M Kendon, S E Knight, A Ross, J Giddy*
- 936 **Antiretroviral treatment uptake in patients with HIV-associated TB attending co-located TB and ART services**  
*M D Nglazi, R Kaplan, J Caldwell, N Peton, S D Lawn, R Wood, L-G Bekker*
- 940 **Antenatal depression and its risk factors: An urban prevalence study in KwaZulu-Natal**  
*L Manikkam, J K Burns*

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*All sea urchins have globular bodies covered with rows of protective spines. Penetration of the spines is usually no more than an irritation to humans, but some species have hollow spines that break off in wounds and inject a toxin that can be extremely painful, though not life-threatening. The urchin shown here (the Flower urchin *Toxopneustes pileolus*) is a tropical species that has short spines and long, transparent, sucker-tipped tube feet that it uses for locomotion. Its surface is also dotted with attractive flower-like 'pedicellaria' — three-jawed structures that can inject venom to discourage predators and stop other species settling on the urchin. The Flower urchin has particularly potent venom, being potentially lethal to humans.*

**Photo and text: George Branch**  
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