



- FROM THE EDITOR**
- 270 **Screening – benefits or harms?**
B Farham
- 271 **EDITOR'S CHOICE**
- CORRESPONDENCE**
- 273 **Triage – keep it simple, swift, safe and scientific**
M Twomey, H Tuffin, L A Wallis
- 273 **An adapted triage tool (ETAT) at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa: An evaluation**
A Westwood, H Buys, B Cheema
- 274 **Artesunate v. quinine for severe malaria**
P Naidoo, S Saman
- 274 **Asthma guidelines: Why aminophylline?**
L A Wallis, M Stander
- 274 **Late termination of pregnancy: Maternal counselling and fetal rights**
J V Larsen; reply by L Govender, J Moodley
- IZINDABA**
- 276 **Autism – mitigating a global epidemic**
- 278 **Whistle blast on private healthcare's 'zero sum game'**
- 279 **'Jack-knife' scrum victim: 8 years on, no payout**
- 281 **Karabus' 'Argo moment' a long time coming**
- SAMJ FORUM**
- MEDICINE AND THE LAW**
- 283 **Is the mass circumcision drive in KwaZulu-Natal involving neonates and children less than 16 years of age legal? What should doctors do?**
D J McQuoid-Mason
- HEALTH AND FINANCE**
- 285 **Private theatre utilisation in South Africa: A case study**
D Hartmann, B Sunjka
- EDITORIALS**
- 288 **Toxicovigilance: Experience of the Tygerberg Poison Information Centre in context**
G H Verdoorn
- 289 **Screening for chronic diseases in South Africa**
R Fryatt
- 290 **Paradigm shift needed for cervical cancer: HPV infection is the real epidemic**
K Richter, G Dreyer
- RESEARCH**
- 293 **Toxicovigilance I: A survey of acute poisonings in South Africa based on Tygerberg Poison Information Centre data**
D J H Veale, C A Wium, G J Müller
- 298 **Toxicovigilance II: A survey of the spectrum of acute poisoning and current practices in the initial management of poisoning cases admitted to South African hospitals**
D J H Veale, C A Wium, G J Müller
- 304 **Vital signs for children at triage: A multicentre validation of the revised South African Triage Scale (SATS) for children**
M Twomey, B Cheema, H Buys, K Cohen, A de Sa, P Louw, M Ismail, H Finlayson, C Cunningham, A Westwood



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- 309 **Provincial screening rates for chronic diseases of lifestyle, cancers and HIV in a health-insured population**
L Adonis, R An, J Luiz, A Mehrotra, D Patel, D Basu, R Sturm
- 313 **Age-specific prevalence of cervical human papillomavirus infection and cytological abnormalities in women in Gauteng Province**
K Richter, P Becker, A Horton, G Dreyer
- 318 **High uptake of Gardasil vaccine among 9 - 12-year-old schoolgirls participating in an HPV vaccination demonstration project in KwaZulu-Natal Province**
L Moodley, N Tathiah, V Mubaiwa, L Denny
- 322 **Risk of nevirapine-associated Stevens-Johnson syndrome among HIV-infected pregnant women: The Medunsa National Pharmacovigilance Centre, 2007 - 2012**
N Dube, E Adewusi, R Summers
- 326 **Bone marrow morphological features and diagnostic value in paediatric disseminated tuberculosis in the setting of increased HIV prevalence**
R Grewal, E A Abayomi
- 330 **Hepatitis B virus in HIV-infected patients in north-eastern South Africa: Prevalence, exposure, protection and response to HAART**
J Ayuk, J Mphahlele, P Bessong
- 334 **CORRECTION**
- PULSE**
- PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING: FOREIGN AND LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES**
- CPD QUESTIONS**
- PART 2**
- 335-349 **South African guideline for the management of chronic hepatitis B: 2013**
C W N Spearman, M W Sonderup, J F Botha, S W van der Merwe, E Song, C Kassianides, K A Newton, H N Hairwadzi



The Mediterranean (or blue) mussel Mytilus galloprovincialis is the most notable of 85 alien marine species documented in South Africa. First recorded in 1979 in Saldanha Bay, it probably arrived attached to an oilrig. It expanded rapidly and now extends from northern Namibia to East London. It is commercially cultured in Saldanha Bay. Its ecological effects are a mixed bag. For indigenous mussels, it is a serious competitor for space. It excludes large limpets by crowding them out; but small species of limpets find shelter in its beds (as is evident here), and have increased in number. For the rare and endangered African Black Oystercatcher, it constitutes an additional source of food, and their reproductive success has risen since its arrival.

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