



## New single-dose treatment for sleeping sickness could help eliminate transmission of the disease

A new, single-dose, oral treatment for sleeping sickness is as effective as current treatments and could be a key factor in eliminating disease transmission by 2030, suggests a new study published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases.

Sleeping sickness, or human African trypanosomiasis (HAT), is a neglected tropical disease, which can be fatal if left untreated. Until 2019, treatment for patients in the earlier stage of the disease was a daily injection for seven or more days and, for patients in the later disease stage, an intravenous drip for seven days, which requires hospitalisation. Patients were also required to undergo a spinal tap, where fluid is collected from the spine, to diagnose the stage of sleeping sickness to determine the most appropriate treatment.

In 2019, a 10-day oral drug (fexinidazole) developed by the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) as a first-line treatment for both stages of the disease, but its administration still requires skilled staff and, often, hospitalisation. The new prospective study looks at the efficacy of one oral dose of acoziborole, a drug co-developed by DNDi and Sanofi, in treating g-HAT.

"The World Health Organisation have set a goal of elimination of g-HAT by 2030 by interrupting the disease's transmission. Although cases are decreasing across Africa, this will be a challenge and we believe the use of acoziborole could be a crucial future tool in efforts to reach our common goal of elimination," says Dr Victor Kande Betu Kumeso, principal investigator of the trial and former Neglected Tropical Diseases Expert Advisor at the Ministry of Health, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

# When hernia bothers you

DR MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH AL MAMUN

A hernia is a defect (hole) in the abdominal muscles through which the abdominal contents (usually fat but sometimes intestines or other abdominal structures) can protrude. That can occur on one or both sides (bilateral) of the groin. It is more common in male.

Hernias may be present at birth, or develop in later life as a result of any factor that weakens the tissues of the abdominal wall (e.g., inherited, genetics, increasing age, smoking, increased pressure within the abdomen - long term cough and sustained heavy lifting).

Hernias may simply present as a painless bulge that enlarges with standing or coughing. Commonly though they cause an aching discomfort or a dragging sensation, occasionally a piece of bowel or fat can get stuck and twisted within the hernia. This is very painful and can lead to a strangulated hernia which is a life-threatening emergency. It is generally recommended, therefore, that hernias be repaired to prevent such complications arising.

Most groin hernias are diagnosed by the clinical history and examination alone. Occasionally, if the diagnosis is unclear or if pain is the predominant symptom and there is no obvious swelling further investigations may be used.

Although having a hernia is not usually a serious condition, hernias will not go away without surgical repair. There is a small chance that a hernia may lead to bowel obstruction or strangulation. A loop of intestine becoming trapped and strangulated.

The surgical options include:  
a. **Open surgery:** A small incision is made in the skin (usually 2.5 - 3 inch) in the groin area.

b. **Keyhole or laparoscopic surgery:** Your operation will be carried out under general anaesthetic. One 10 mm and two 5 mm cuts are

made in your abdomen.

In a procedure called TAPP (Trans-Abdominal Pre-Peritoneal), the telescope is placed into the abdominal cavity. In another procedure called TEP (Totally extra-peritoneal), the abdominal cavity is not entered and the operation takes place placed in the space between the muscles and

operation).

- bilateral hernias (hernias in both groins)
- hernias in women (there is some evidence that women have a higher chance of another undiagnosed hernia that is not easily seen during open surgery)
- very active patients whose



the lining of the abdomen. All of the operations usually take between 30 minutes to 90 minutes operating time.

Many patients, who develop a hernia, have a tissue weakness which does not hold stitches well. This explains why repairs with stitches have a higher failure rate than those with additional mesh. For the vast majority of patients, mesh poses little if any additional risk, and coupled with a lower recurrence rate, has resulted in the use of mesh becoming the gold standard in hernia repairs.

The surgeon's expertise in a particular technique are at least as important as the type of repair that is being performed. Take your decision after discussion with your surgeon.

In certain circumstances keyhole laparoscopic repair may be beneficial. These are:

- recurrent hernias (that have come back after being surgically repaired before using the open

predominant symptom is pain

If you experience any of the symptoms below you should contact your surgeon as soon as possible and it is important, to make them aware of this.

- Severe abdominal groin or testicle pain
- Loss of appetite, increasing nausea or vomiting
- Fever or flu like symptoms
- Redness/swelling at the surgical site
- Calf pain or increasing breathlessness

Usually you can go home on the same day. Sometimes it is recommended that you stay in overnight. You should be able to return to office work by two weeks and manual work by about four weeks.

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## Looking toward a cure for Hepatitis B

Infection with hepatitis B virus (HBV) can be effectively treated with an oral nucleoside or nucleotide analog (NA). Still, lifelong daily medication is required and the clinical rebound that results from stopping medication can be severe. As is the case for other chronic viral infections, the holy grail of treatment would be a molecule to induce permanent remission with a delimited course of treatment. One proposed compound is the antisense nucleotide bepirovirsen, which inactivates HBV RNA in multiple capacities and limits viral protein synthesis.

In a worldwide, multicenter, manufacturer-supported, phase 2B trial, researchers randomized 457 adults with chronic HBV infection to one of four dosing schedules of weekly bepirovirsen administered subcutaneously. Participants were mostly white or Asian men; half were also receiving NA treatment. After 12 or 24 weeks of bepirovirsen and 24 weeks of treatment free follow up, 26 participants (6%) maintained persistently undetectable HB surface antigen (HBsAg) and HBV DNA. If viral "blips" were discounted, the number with a sustained response rose to 31.

Factors correlating with sustained response included low HbsAg level at study entry and randomisation to the highest dose and longest duration of bepirovirsen. Adverse effects included injection-site reactions, fever, and in two patients, severe hepatitis requiring hospitalisation.

While these results are perhaps not as dramatic as desired, they still suggest that, with adjustments in dose or duration, a course of bepirovirsen (or another antisense agent) may incapacitate HBV without the need for ongoing treatment.

An editorialist who is a veteran hepatologist is optimistic, concluding that with these agents "a new era in the control of hepatitis B may be at hand."

## Disability Day and Occupational Therapy

RABEYA FERDOUS

Every year, 3<sup>rd</sup> December is observed as the International Day of Person with Disability. It was firstly started in 1992. From that day it is celebrate all over the world. This year's theme is "Not all Disabilities are Visible." Some disabilities like mental health conditions, chronic pain and fatigue are invisible.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), some 47.42 lakh people which is 2.4% of the total population in the country are physically or mentally challenged. Among them, there are some invisible disabilities where their brain wired differently from their able-bodied counterpart. These are called neurodiversity. These include ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Tourette's syndrome.

Occupational therapist works for making independence to disable people into their everyday activities. Occupational therapist not only treat physical problem, they also work for psycho-social, community and environmental factors.

The main purpose of Occupational therapy is to enhance functional activities of disable people. An occupational therapist works for disable person in following ways:

1. Provide treatment on how to do



things with the abilities they have. Occupational therapy treatment includes:

- Memory training
  - Teaching one handed techniques
  - Teaching money management techniques
  - Teaching the uses of public transport to disable people
  - Stress management training
  - Anger management training
2. Provide treatment for improving the abilities like:
- Improve coordination
  - Improve coping skills
  - Increase concentration
  - Improve confidence level

People with disabilities face different problems. Stigma and

discrimination are most common for them. Some people say, disable people are curse of Allah. Some say if they see any face of disabled people, it spoils their whole day. This way people discriminate disabled people everywhere.

Disabled people do not get equal opportunities to participate in social activities. They are neglected from every steps in life. Bangladesh government provides different opportunities to make them independent. Despite, their facilities are not enough to fulfil the demand. There should be a significant increase in the facilities.

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## First Biologic Summit held

With the objective of raising ample public awareness on the uses of modern and effective biologic medicines, the first ever "Biologic Summit" was held recently in Dhaka, says a press release. Biologic medicine can play a game changing role in the treatment of diseases such as diabetes, arthritis, and psoriasis, opined experts in the summit.

The overall scenario of medical industry has drastically transformed over the past couple of decades. From chemical compounds it shifted to biologics and cell and gene therapy. The future of biologics seems very promising. Yet, due to certain challenges, the uses of biologics in Bangladesh still remains within a bubble. Since biologics show great potential in the near future, Bangladesh requires to prepare adapting its appropriate implementation.

The summit centered on the basic grounds of biologic medicines, elaborating on its concept and persisting challenges, and opting to ready Bangladesh for its utilisation in the future.



## Dhaka Flow: Festival of yoga and wellness

A festival of Yoga and Wellness will take place at Justice Shahabuddin Park in Gulshan 2, on December 9, 2022, from 11 am - 5 pm, says a press release.

The event is free and open to public. It features yoga classes taught by top yoga instructors Shazzy Om, Yoganika, Yoga with Dyuti, Faria Athar and Piya. Participants are requested to bring their yoga mat. The sessions are suitable for all ages and sizes.

It also will offer classes on HIIT, dance, meditation, breathing, intuitive healing, martial arts and jujitsu.

The event includes over 30 stalls of products and services geared towards healthy living and wellness. Visit [www.shorturl.at/bcfo5](http://www.shorturl.at/bcfo5) to register.

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