

MEDIA SUMMARY REPORT

HEALTH ISSUE

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Obesity accounts for 18 percent deaths

A US data study, published in American Journal of Public Health, shows that obesity accounts for 18 percent deaths among 40 to 85-year-old Americans. One in five Americans die because of obesity-related disease. This number is higher than expected previously, said Ryan Masters, researcher at Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The study used 1986-2006 data consisting of thousands samples through National Health Interview Survey and recorded death rate and body mass index. The study is among the first to observe age, gender and race differences to analyse obesity-related death risk in USA.

Person quoted (s): Ryan Masters, researcher, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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Oral bacteria may trigger colon cancer

Several American researchers have discovered that oral bacteria (fusobacteria) may trigger colorectal cancer, according to two studies published in Cell Host & Microbe Journal. In USA, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths. However, it is not known exactly how fusobacteria can increase tumour development. In a recent study, fusobacteria rely on FadA molecule to attach and penetrate cancer cell, said Professor Yiping Han, researcher at Case Western Reserve University. The FadA rate is 10 to 100 times higher in malignant colorectal cancer cells than normal condition. Researchers at Harvard School of Public Health and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute found that fusobacteria are generally present in adenomas (benign tumour). The bacteria accelerate tumour development by drawing immune cells to attack the tumour, causing inflammation that may trigger cancer.

Person quoted (s): Yiping Han, researcher, Case Western Reserve University

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Xeloda in metastatic breast cancer

Breast cancer still ranks as the first leading cause of cancer-related death among women. Nearly 50% women diagnosed by primary breast cancer will develop metastasis. At much later stage, breast cancer is difficult to treat. Breast cancer prognosis depends on age, cancer stage and estrogen receptor status. First line chemotherapy for metastatic breast cancer is CMF and anthracycline regiment. National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommend taxane-type chemotherapy for late-stage breast cancer. Capecitabine (Xeloda) is recommended as the first line chemotherapy for late-stage breast cancer that can be used as monotherapy or combined therapy with taxane. A study in NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination shows that capecitabine monotherapy may increase patient's survivability. Capecitabine can also be used to treat colorectal cancer. However, it has side effects such as indigestion and hand foot syndrome.

Person quoted (s): -

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

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Marked Up to 32 Percent

Many pharmacies mark up prices to 37 percent from net price making consumers worse off, said Dani Pratomo, President of Indonesian Pharmacy Association (IAI). Drug price is adjusted arbitrarily and consumers cannot do anything because they need it. Pharmacies that get discounted price usually do not lower consumer price. Government should enforce strict and decent regulation to monitor price. Ideally, a pharmacy should sell its products based on net price and receive pharmacy fee per transaction to generate profit. The IAI step has positive response from Indonesian Medical Doctors Association (IDI). Price control should be more monitored during the implementation of National Social Security System (SJSN) beginning on January 1, 2014, said Zaenal Abidin, IDI President. Government can be sued over its negligence to implement 1945 Constitution, said Sudaryatmo, Head of Indonesian Consumer Protection Foundation (YLKI).

Person quoted (s): Zaenal Abidin, IDI President
Sudaryatmo, Head of YLKI