

Economics, epidemiology and outcomes

This month's issue of *The Journal of Laryngology & Otology* provides much room for thought. The economic impact of recurrent respiratory papilloma, a benign disease with a natural history that is relapsing and remitting over several years, has not previously been estimated in the UK. Harrison *et al.* have now done so and the costs are significant.¹ The case for prevention and combined concurrent adjunctive treatment remains strong and holds promise.²

The hypothesis that the age of onset of Ménière's disease is increasing as the elderly take to work with its attendant stress³ has not been corroborated by Van Esch and colleagues' epidemiological study from the Netherlands.⁴ Ménière's disease has a peak incidence between 40 and 69 years in the Netherlands, as in most other countries.⁵

The age for closure of a child's perforated eardrum has been a controversial matter.⁶ Singh *et al.* show that the comparative outcomes of tympanoplasty in younger children are no different from those in older children.⁷ In cases of small vestibular schwannomas with serviceable hearing, Peng and Wilkinson's systematic review on the outcomes of microsurgery in relation to observation and stereotactic radiation shows that, for patients under the age of 65 years, microsurgery via the middle fossa offers durable preservation of hearing.⁸ One of the vicissitudes that occasionally occurs in thyroid surgery is incidental parathyroidectomy. Hone *et al.* report that concurrent neck dissection is an independent

predictor of incidental parathyroidectomy and increases the risk by a factor of four.⁹

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