

## FOR SHORT ANSWERS

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## FOR LONG ANSWERS

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### ON EXAMINATION QUIZ

#### Acute pancreatitis

This week's question comes from the onExamination revision questions for the MRCS part 1 exam.

Which of the following is an indicator of poor prognosis in acute pancreatitis?

- A Albumin concentration of 35 g/L
- B Alanine aminotransferase concentration of 130 U/L
- C Calcium concentration of 1.91 mmol/L
- D Creatinine concentration of 130  $\mu$ mol/L
- E Partial pressure of oxygen of 10 kPa



### PICTURE QUIZ

#### Nail changes in a patient with leukaemia

A 60 year old retired soldier presented to our primary care department with progressive nail pigmentation in both hands over the preceding year. No history of mucosal bleeding or nail trauma was elicited. He had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and hypertension three years ago and chronic myeloid leukaemia two years ago. He had been taking losartan and atorvastatin for three years, plus metformin, glimepiride, and hydroxyurea (500 mg twice daily) for two years. Treatment with hydroxyurea had induced a sustained haematological remission for the past 18 months. On examination his vital signs were stable. All nails on his hands were affected (fig), but the rest of his skin was normal.

- 1 How would you describe the abnormality?
- 2 What causes this condition and what is the most likely cause in this case?
- 3 What further investigations are appropriate?
- 4 How would you manage this patient?

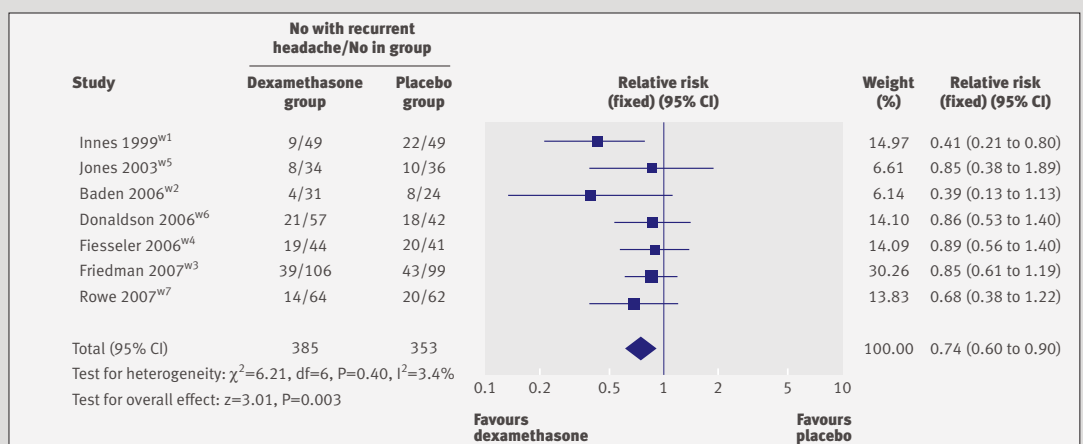
Submitted by M Emmanuel Bhaskar  
Cite this as: *BMJ* 2011;342:c6439

### STATISTICAL QUESTION

#### Meta-analyses

Researchers undertook a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of parenteral corticosteroids for relief of acute severe migraine headache in adults. Seven randomised controlled trials were identified in which single dose parenteral dexamethasone, administered alone or in combination with standard abortive therapy, was compared with placebo or any other standard treatment for acute migraine in adults. For each trial, the relative risk for recurrence of headache within 72 hours for the dexamethasone treatment arm compared with the placebo arm was obtained.

The results of the meta-analyses are presented in the figure. When combined with standard abortive therapy, single dose parenteral dexamethasone was more effective than placebo in reducing recurrence of headache within 72 hours (relative risk 0.74, 95% confidence interval 0.60 to 0.90).



Which of the following statements, if any, are true?

- a) Each trial produced an estimate of the population relative risk
- b) The meta-analysis combined the results of the seven trials
- c) The overall relative risk was more precise than any of those for the individual trials
- d) The results of the meta-analysis could be generalised to a wider patient population than could any of the results for the individual trials

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Cite this as: *BMJ* 2011;342:d45