

References

1. *Access to Information Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. A-1, s. 20(6).
2. Science Advisory Board Committee on the Drug Review Process. Appendix F: Notes on Canadian law and the drug review process. In: *Report to Health Canada*. Ottawa: The Committee; 2000.
3. Lexchin J, Mintzes B. Transparency in drug regulation: Mirage or oasis? [editorial]. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(11):1363-5.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050055

Training pediatricians

A recent item in the CMA Bulletin¹ discussed a proposal from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) to reduce the number of PGY-1 training programs from approximately 30 to just a few “generalist competency” training streams. This proposal has been presented as an alternative to the “common PGY-1 year,” previously discussed as a model to improve medical students’ flexibility in deciding on a career path.

The Residents Section of the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), representing over 500 pediatric residents in Canada, has a mandate to examine and ensure the quality of pediatric training in Canada. In a recent survey, members of the Residents Section expressed interest in the common PGY-1 year and emphasized the importance of retaining 4 years of pediatric training to allow proper development of the skills of Canada’s pediatricians.² Allowing for additional flexibility in residency training while encouraging residents’ interests in a given specialty during their first year of training might also accomplish the goal of preventing early and later-regretted career decisions. We are therefore pleased that pediatric training will be represented in the new RCPSC model and we look forward to examining the proposal in detail. The goals already identified² remain the same: increased flexibility for residents and medical students while maintaining the depth and quantity of pediatric residency training. We continue to oppose any move to shorten training in pediatric specialty rotations. We believe that the medical treatment of children presents unique challenges, disease

processes and training goals and that few of these goals would be met during rotation through adult specialties. As such, maintaining a PGY-1 year with focused pediatric rotations and improved flexibility for those residents who wish to transfer to or from a program may represent the ideal solution.

Eric I. Benchimol

President, Residents Section
Canadian Paediatric Society
Ottawa, Ont.

References

1. Major changes in residency training on horizon. *CMAJ* 2005;172(4):595.
2. Benchimol EI. The common postgraduate year 1: a paediatric perspective [editorial]. *Paediatr Child Health* 2004;9(9):625-6.

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Tintin in CMAJ

The article by Antoine Cyr and associates¹ is a fascinating perspective into the enigmatic delayed development of Tintin. The researchers must be commended for such insightful extrapolation from the limited source material. One wonders about Asterix and Obelix and the possible glandular or other systemic deficiencies that might be contributing to their sizes, body masses and apparent halted development. Perhaps the toxicity of cartoon ink should be independently evaluated.

Brent L. Hay

Calgary, Alta.

Reference

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004;171(12):1433-4.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050008

Enfin une étude transcendante qui permet de soulager mes angoisses existentielles! Enfin j’aurai compris pourquoi je vois douloureusement les ans s’égrener alors que Tintin est gratifié de cette éternelle jeunesse ... Mes parents ne me tapaient pas sur la tête, et leurs stratégies pédagogiques, orientées

du bas vers le haut sur mon postérieur, ont-elles eu l’effet de me faire pousser plus rapidement (j’ai commencé à me raser à 13 ans).

Je souhaite ardemment que les augustes chercheurs de cette étude s’attaquent à une autre source d’inconfort planétaire : le secret de la Caramilk!

Yves Lambert

Centres jeunesse de la Montérégie
Longueuil, Que.

Référence

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *JAMC* 2004;171(12):1433-4.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050007

I read the article by Antoine Cyr and associates¹ with a growing sense of perplexion. For such an eminently qualified research group to miss the nub of the mystery is astounding. The obvious causes of our hero’s “Peter Pan-ism” needed no such study, but the greater mystery did: How could Tintin’s dog Milou live for 50 years (350 years in canine terms), especially after being shot at least 10 times?

I await the results of further investigation.

Craig D. Baker

Lincoln, England

Reference

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(12):1433-4.

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With Hergé’s approval, Frederic Tuten wrote *Tintin in the New World*,¹ wherein Tintin meets the seductive Clavdia in Peru. One night, “sighs float to the ceiling ... a blue glow emanates from the bed center ... two animals collide and adhere.” Tintin is cured!

Young coauthors Antoine Cyr and Louis-Olivier Cyr might wait a few years before trying this book, but I bet their more senior coauthor Claude Cyr

would love it.² The familiar characters appear, and the inside cover art is by Roy Lichtenstein.

Thomas J. McGuire
Berkeley Fire Department
Berkeley, Calif.

References

1. Tuten F. *Tintin in the new world*. New York: William Morrow & Co.; 1993.
2. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(12):1433-4.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050009

Congratulations to Antoine Cyr and associates¹ for their excellent article on Tintin's health disorder. This article shows kids an excellent example of what a scientific article looks like. Its potential educational value should not be underestimated.

Rémi Parmentier
Madrid, Spain

Reference

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(12):1433-4.

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The concept of using the adventures of Tintin¹ and other cartoon or comic book characters as medical case studies is a creative way to popularize medicine.

It is amusing to see how Antoine Cyr and associates¹ have translated Tintin's adventures to the real world by collecting empiric data from the Tintin album collection. Involving children in such a scientific study is also great.

I read my Tintin albums differently since coming across this article!

David Neveu

Graduate student, Electrical Engineering
Université de Sherbrooke
Sherbrooke, Que.

Reference

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma,

or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(12):1433-4.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050018

[One of the authors responds:]

From these readers' comments about our Tintin article¹ I have learned that excluding fantasy from science amounts to foolish neglect of an opportunity to develop interest in science and research. The positive impact of this project on my children was equal to the article's impact on busy doctors, some of whom spoke to me for the first time after reading the study. Their smiles provided relief from the winter blues. Suddenly, stressed surgeons began sharing with me their childhood memories about Tintin and assured me that they will read Hergé's work again to confirm the findings we reported. This alone was worth jeopardizing my reputation as a "serious researcher."

As Douglas Adams wrote, "Science has achieved some wonderful things of course, but I'd far rather be happy than right any day."² Maybe we weren't right, but this publication certainly made my sons happy. As it turned out, Dec. 7, 2004, the publication date of our article, was by coincidence the 6th birthday of Antoine, first author on the article. I want to thank the journal and the lay media for making me look like the best dad in his eyes. He is convinced that I arranged coast-to-coast

media coverage as a special birthday celebration.

Claude Cyr

Pédiatricienne
Département de pédiatrie
Université de Sherbrooke
Sherbrooke, Que.

References

1. Cyr A, Cyr LO, Cyr C. Acquired growth hormone deficiency and hypogonadotropic hypogonadism in a subject with repeated head trauma, or Tintin goes to the neurologist. *CMAJ* 2004; 171(12):1433-4.
2. Adams D. *The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy*. London: Pan Macmillan; 1979. p. 143.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1050062

Corrections

The DOI attached to a letter to the editor¹ published last year should have read 10.1503/cmaj.1050132.

Reference

1. Brock G. Does testosterone affect effect? [letter]. *CMAJ* 2004;171(6):553.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.050645

The DOI attached to a Query article¹ published last year should have read 10.1503/cmaj.1050133.

Reference

1. Query. *CMAJ* 2004;170(8):1360.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.050646

Mécanisme de présentation des lettres

Le site amélioré des cyberlettres du JAMC est désormais le portail de réception de tous les textes destinés à la chronique Lettres. Pour rédiger une cyberlettre, consultez un article sur le site www.jamc.ca et cliquez ensuite sur le lien «Lettres électroniques : répondre à cet article», dans la boîte en haut à droite de l'article. Toutes les cyberlettres seront étudiées pour une éventuelle publication dans le journal imprimé.

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