

Dear friends of clinical journal club - load the file down at <https://www.mdc-berlin.de/cjc>. This website also gives you access to my seminar on Wednesdays 16:00 English and 17:00 German. You need to click on *Besprechung beizutreten*. If it fails to work immediately, keep on clicking.

A 63-year-old woman with psoriatic arthritis involving her knees presented for evaluation of 9-months of pain in the left knee. Physical examination was notable for a nontender, palpable mass in the left popliteal fossa. Point-of-care musculoskeletal ultrasonography is shown. What is the most likely diagnosis? You are offered: Cruciate ligament cyst, Deep vein thrombosis, Pes anserine bursitis, Popliteal synovial cyst (Baker's Cyst), and Pseudothrombophlebitis. No mystery resides here. Whether successful catheter ablation for atrial fibrillation eliminates the need for long-term oral anticoagulant therapy is unknown. Investigators conducted an international, open-label, randomized, blinded-outcome-assessment trial involving 1284 patients who had undergone successful catheter ablation for atrial fibrillation at least 1 year earlier and had a CHA2DS2-VASc score (scores range from 0 to 9, with higher scores indicating a higher risk of stroke) of 1 or more (or  $\geq 2$  for women or for patients in whom vascular disease was a risk factor). Patients were randomly assigned to receive either aspirin (at a dose of 70 to 120 mg daily, depending on availability in the local jurisdiction) or rivaroxaban (at a dose of 15 mg) and followed for 3 years. The primary outcome was a composite of stroke, systemic embolism, or new covert embolic stroke (defined by  $\geq 1$  new infarct measuring  $\geq 15$  mm on MRI) at 3 years. In terms of the primary endpoint, rivaroxaban looked a bit better than aspirin. In terms of bleeding, the reverse was the case. Nothing was statistically significant. In the CheckMate 238 trial, patients with resected stage IIIB–C or stage IV melanoma who were treated with nivolumab had longer recurrence-free survival than those who received ipilimumab. Data were needed on longer-term survival. The investigators randomly assigned patients in a 1:1 ratio to receive an intravenous infusion of nivolumab (at a dose of 3 mg per kilogram of body weight every 2 weeks) or ipilimumab (at a dose of 10 mg per kilogram every 3 weeks for four doses, then every 12 weeks) for up to 1 year or until disease recurrence or the occurrence of unacceptable toxic effects. Randomization was stratified according to disease stage and status with respect to programmed cell death ligand 1. The primary end point was recurrence-free survival; secondary end points included

overall and distant metastasis-free survival and safety. Now nine years out, the initial results were maintained and confirmed. Both tobevibart (a monoclonal antibody) and elebsiran (a small interfering RNA) target hepatitis B virus surface antigen (HBsAg). Hepatitis D carries HBsAG. The efficacy and safety of these drugs in the treatment of chronic hepatitis D virus (HDV) infection are unknown. In this ongoing, phase 2, open-label trial, investigators randomly assigned participants to receive tobevibart plus elebsiran every 4 weeks or tobevibart monotherapy every 2 weeks. The primary end point was a combined response. Tobeivibart and elebsiran met the expectations and were effective against hepatitis D. Triple-negative breast cancer is an aggressive breast cancer subtype, and there remains an unmet need to improve outcomes in patients with previously untreated, programmed death ligand 1 (PD-L1)-positive, locally advanced unresectable or metastatic triple-negative breast cancer. In this phase 3, open-label, international trial, investigators randomly assigned patients in a 1:1 ratio to receive sacituzumab govitecan plus pembrolizumab or chemotherapy plus pembrolizumab. The primary end point was progression-free survival as assessed by blinded independent central review. Sacituzumab govitecan plus pembrolizumab beat the standard care. Overall survival could not yet be assessed. Recent studies support targeting the His bundle or left bundle branch as an alternative cardiac physiologic pacing strategy for persons with heart failure who have a wide QRS in their electrocardiograms. N Engl J Med reviews the topic. The N Engl J Med mystery patient has relatively sudden onset of fever and double vision. A sedentary lifestyle—defined as excessive sitting or low energy expenditure—significantly increases the risk of premature death, with risks comparable to smoking or obesity. Sitting for over eight hours a day without exercise raises mortality risk by nearly 38%, with 1 in 6 deaths attributed to inactivity. It doubles the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. We inspect a Lancet meta-analysis of this complex topic. Vaccine hesitancy is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite the availability of vaccination services. It is recognized as one of the top 10 threats to global health. A nationwide UK cohort study investigates the reasons for vaccine hesitancy. Head and neck cancer refers to a group of malignancies that usually begin in the squamous cells lining the moist mucosal surfaces of the head and neck, such as the mouth, throat, and voice box. A Lancet

study suggests that nivolumab could lead to better outcomes compared to conventional chemotherapy in these patients. In persons with nonsmall-cell lung cancer (NSCLC), EGFR mutations are quite common. Addressing the EGFR and signaling pathway (MEK) together sounds like a solid option in these patients. This idea was tested and we learn that savolitinib plus osimertinib beat pemetrexed plus cisplatin. In 2026, healthcare in India is a massive, multi-tiered system undergoing rapid digital and structural transformation to achieve universal coverage. It is characterized by a significant divide between public and private sectors, as well as between urban and rural access. A learned Lancet commission discusses how to improve the Indian health care system by making it more citizen centered. Platelets are like hand grenades. Once primed they go off and have many effects. These effects are in part signaled by GPIIb/IIIa, also known as integrin  $\alpha$ IIb $\beta$ 3. In Science Magazine, we learn that the platelet-derived integrin  $\alpha$ IIb $\beta$ 3, together with tetraspanin, forms enriched tethers (PITTs). PITTs may have contributed to blood clotting, immune dysregulation, and bleeding complications that characterized severe Covid-19 infections. In the Washington Post we inspect the photograph of a 5-year-old Minneapolis child used as bait by ICE personnel to capture the parents. The boy and his father were sent off to a detention center in Texas (formerly called concentration camps). The presentation is solely in English this week. The next oral presentation will be on January 28, 2026.

Sincerely, Fred Luft

[Friedrich.luft@charite.de](mailto:Friedrich.luft@charite.de)

<https://www.mdc-berlin.de/cjc>