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**DIGESTIVE DEASESE UPDATE:** Gastroenterologists throughout Canada and from around the world recently journeyed to Banff, Alta., to attend the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology's annual Canadian Digestive Disease Week (CDDW) meeting. No doubt, many also took advantage of the world-class skiing the area offers. *Medical Post* staff writer David Hodges attended the meeting and files these reports.

## CDDW UPDATE: In brief

### **H. pylori patients do better as outpatients**

Treatment of *Helicobacter pylori* infection is poorer among inpatients than outpatients, according to a University of Western Ontario study. A review of the treatment records of 193 patients diagnosed with this condition at the London Health Sciences Centre in 2004 showed 92% of the 143 outpatients received *H.pylori* eradication therapy compared with only 60% of the 50 inpatients. Inpatient pathology reports were available before discharge in just 40% of cases. In 47% of inpatients, empiric treatment without the availability of *H.pylori* status occurred. More rapid reporting or more careful followup of pathology reports is needed, the study authors said.

### **When it comes to screening shy patients, try a little tenderness**

Doctors weary of trying to convince patients to undergo colorectal cancer screening should try a little tenderness, according to McGill University researchers.

Using validated self-administered questionnaires, they assessed the psychosocial characteristics of 283 patients ages 50 to 80 years without previous or current colorectal cancer, immediately after they received a physician's recommendation for screening. Only 128 underwent the exam. Patients who received higher emotional social support (love, caring, empathy) were 44% more likely to follow their doctor's recommendation.

### **Internet IBD info inadequate**

A growing number of patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) are using the Internet to learn more about treatment of their condition, but few Web sites are providing quality information. Researchers from Dalhousie University in Halifax say there is an "urgent need" for accreditation of these online resources. In their study, two independent raters evaluated the quality of information on the top 50 IBD sites retrieved by Google. The medical treatments evaluated were 5-ASA, corticosteroids, azathioprine/6-MP, infliximab and other immune suppressants. Web sites were rated using a Quality Evaluation Instrument covering drug indications, efficacy and common or serious side-effects, with a maximum possible score of 101. The average score was 36 (range 0 to 96); only six sites scored 70 or greater and 13 scored 50 or lower. Moreover, only 24 sites indicated when they were last updated, and only 23 disclosed their funding source.

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