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INDUSTRY NEWS

The Case for Repurposing Established Drugs in Novel Combination Therapies

February 22, 2022

www.pharmacytimes.com

Currently, the most utilized drugs for inflammatory conditions are either over-the-counter standbys (i.e. Aspirin and Benadryl) or expensive biologics with complex administration requirements (i.e. Humira). This gap, where nothing advanced, but still easy and to use exists for immune modulating anti-inflammatory space offers an opportunity to create a “new” therapy based on a combination of the aforementioned OTC standbys – all of which have 20+ years of safety and efficacy data to expedite the review and approval process. [1]

A fourth COVID vaccine shot: Will it be necessary?

February 19, 2022

www.foxnews.com

Booster shots have proven successful in preventing serious illness and death from COVID-19 – but whether a fourth shot will be recommended for the general public remains to be seen. The CDC continues to monitor the ‘durability’ of boosters and expects, if anything, boosters may be a prudent option this fall. Currently, the recommendation is for immunocompromised individuals to get an additional booster now. [2]

Researchers may be close to a cure for type 1 diabetes

February 25, 2022

www.medicalxpress.com

Researchers are working on a way to better manage the use of pancreatic stem cell transplants to treat (and possibly cure) type 1 diabetes. Currently, trial recipients of the stem cells must take high doses of immune-suppressing drugs to reduce the likelihood of the body rejecting the transplants. In order to eventually offer the therapy so that patients require lower levels of immunosuppressants, researchers are investigating ways of encapsulating the cells before injecting them. [3]

Drugmakers Sanofi and GSK to seek authorization for Covid vaccine

February 23, 2022

www.nbcnews.com

Trial results for the Sanofi-GlaxoSmithKline, two-dose vaccine indicate a 58% effective rate of preventing infection and 75% effective rate of preventing severe complications. This is the second time the companies have run their vaccine through drug trials; the first version did not hold enough immunity for people over 60 years old. The drugmakers will seek approval in both the US and Europe. [4]

Covid deaths highest in a year as omicron targets the unvaccinated and elderly

February 8, 2022

www.washingtonpost.com

Although the Omicron variant is less likely to cause severe infection than previous strains of COVID-19, because it is highly contagious, it continues to drive up death rates in elderly, immune-compromised and unvaccinated populations. The high death rate may be due, in part, to waning vaccine effectiveness in unboosted individuals. [5]



Psilocybin: A Treatment for Depression [Runtime: 3:56]

Podcast Series: Second Opinion

Browser Link: <https://www.kcrw.com/culture/shows/second-opinion/psilocybin-a-treatment-for-depression>

Psilocybin is one of a handful of hallucinogenic drugs that practitioners and researchers are investigating for use in the treatment of mental disorders. Taking the drug can result in changes to spiritual and interpersonal connections, a loss of feelings of 'self-importance' and changes in one's world view – more broadly, the side effects of this class of drugs (which also includes LSD and mescaline) are described as 'unlike anything you can imagine.' That description has led medical ethicists to consider the concept of informed consent: Weight gain and sleeplessness are two concepts that people can imagine and, with relative certainty, decide if they are willing to make that trade off when using new medications. But when patients can't fathom how it might feel to be "susceptible to beliefs that we would normally never support," how can they establish reasonable confidence in their ability to tolerate the drug's side effects? Additional work is required as mind-altering drugs become more common in medical work. [6]

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Sources

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[6] Wilkes, Michael (2022, February 13) Second Opinion: Psilocybin: a treatment for depression [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://www.kcrw.com/culture/shows/second-opinion/psilocybin-a-treatment-for-depression> on February 18, 2022.

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