



24 Oct



1 Nov

25 Oct



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1 Nov

**17 Oct** Fifty Polish scientists sign a letter protesting an **anti-evolution** campaign promoted by the League of Polish Families, an extreme right-wing coalition partner in Poland's conservative government.

**18 Oct** Brigham Young University researcher Daniel Simmons sues Pfizer, alleging that Monsanto, which merged with the pharmaceutical giant in 2003, stole his **intellectual property** and used it to develop the blockbuster anti-inflammatory drug **Celebrex**.

**20 Oct** **North Korea** is practicing **eugenics**, holding physically and mentally disabled citizens in gulags, barring them from having children and using them as slave laborers and guinea pigs for weapons tests, says a UN report.

**20 Oct** A federal judge allows Boston University and the US National Institutes of Health to continue building their \$178 million **biodefense lab**, pending a final decision after they've reassessed the dangers of accidental pathogen release.

**23 Oct** A **meningococcal vaccine** made by Sanofi Pasteur is linked to 17 cases in the US of **Guillain-Barré Syndrome**, a rare neurological disorder.

**24 Oct** **Eric Topol**, former head of the Cleveland Clinic's cardiovascular medicine department, is picked to lead San Diego-based Scripps Health's new Translational Science Institute and Genomic Medicine program.

**24 Oct** South African virologist **Girish Kotwal** announces his **resignation** from the University of Cape Town following an investigation into his research practices, prompted by a *Nature*

*Medicine* article about his involvement with an herbal AIDS remedy called Secomet (*Nat. Med.* **12**, 723–724).

**24 Oct** The FDA rejects an activist group's petition for a **ban on thimerosal**—a mercury-containing vaccine additive largely abandoned in the US—which has been linked to autism (*Nat. Med.* **11**, 1228–1229).

**25 Oct** The ethics committee at London's Royal Free Hospital approves a plan to perform four **full-face transplants**, but some experts urge the hospital to wait until they have set ethical and medical standards for the procedure.

**25 Oct** US researchers release the **genomic sequences**—which include 8.3 million previously undiscovered DNA polymorphisms—of 15 **mouse strains** commonly used in medical research.

**25 Oct** More than 80% of **embryos** selected on the basis of their metabolic activity are **successfully implanted**, compared with 34% of those picked for size and growth, Yale University researchers announce at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine's annual meeting.

**26 Oct** The World Health Organization and 25 pharmaceutical companies, non-governmental agencies and international health agencies together launch a fight against **neglected tropical diseases**, such as river blindness and elephantiasis, which affect more than a billion people.

**26 Oct** A mutation in a gene that helps regulate **inflammation** protects against **Crohn disease** and its discovery may aid the development of treatments, researchers say (*Science* doi: 10.1126/science.1135245).

**26 Oct** Nearly 40% of **NIH scientists** are considering **new jobs** that wouldn't limit their outside earnings, says an internal survey.

**27 Oct** **Indian** researchers say sex workers account for between 2% and 13% of the country's **HIV transmission**, rather than 27% as is thought, and that overestimates deflect attention from other sources of infection (*Int. J. STD AIDS* **11**, 731–735).

**30 Oct** The Fujian strain of H5N1 **avian influenza**, identified last year, is widespread in southern China and is largely immune to poultry vaccines, researchers report (*Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* **103**, 16936–16941).

**1 Nov** The World Health Organization **chastises China's** agriculture ministry for not sharing its samples of the Fujian **avian influenza** strain.

**1 Nov** **Sudden infant death syndrome**, long considered a mystery disease, is linked to abnormalities in serotonin-producing neurons that help regulate breathing and carbon dioxide sensitivity (*JAMA* **296**, 2124–2132).

**1 Nov** Resveratrol, a compound that is found in **red wine**, in overweight mice reverses the genetic changes associated with diabetes, heart disease and other **obesity-related** conditions, say Harvard Medical School researchers (*Nature* **444**, 337–342).

**1 Nov** The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention adds Gardasil, the first **cervical cancer vaccine**, to a list of vaccines purchased by the government for poor and uninsured children.



13 Nov



**2 Nov** More than 100 Nobel laureates petition **Libyan leader** Muammar al-Gaddafi for a **fair trial** for six foreign aid workers accused of infecting more than 400 children with HIV. Experts have said the infections were probably caused by poor hospital hygiene (*Nature* **444**, 146).

**3 Nov** Quality concerns prompt the FDA to postpone clinical trials of an **anthrax** vaccine made by VaxGen, a California-based company hired to make 75 million doses.

**3 Nov** Pharmaceutical giant **Eli Lilly** admits to being **subpoenaed** by California's Attorney General for information about its marketing of antipsychotic drugs, and about the drugs' use by a state insurance program. Lilly is the fourth drugmaker since September that the state has subpoenaed.

**3 Nov** Seattle-based Cell Therapeutics halts its clinical trial of **Xyotax**, an experimental lung cancer drug, after reports of **premature deaths** among participants.

**6 Nov** Adult survivors of childhood leukemia and brain tumors have a high risk of stroke, underscoring the need for monitoring long-term **side effects of cancer treatment**, report researchers from the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study (*Nat. Med.* **11**, 1132–1133; 2005, *J. Clin. Onc.* doi:10.1200/JCO.2006.07.2884).

**7 Nov** **Stephen Straus**, first director of the US National Center of Complementary and Alternative Medicine, **resigns**. He is credited with applying careful analysis to unconventional and previously unevaluated treatments.

**8 Nov** Environmentally ubiquitous **industrial chemicals** such as solvents and

pesticides have **damaged the brains** of millions of children, say US scientists (*Lancet* doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(06)69665-69667).

**8 Nov** **Low-carbohydrate diets** such as the Atkins don't increase women's risks of obesity or **heart disease** and those high in vegetable fats and proteins may actually decrease risk, according to data from the Nurses' Health Study (*N. Engl. J. Med.* **355**, 1991–2002).

**8 Nov** **Mountain gorillas** in west central Africa harbor a strain of **HIV**, the first found outside of humans and chimpanzees, French researchers say (*Nature* **444**, 164).

**9 Nov** **Chloroquine**, a malaria drug abandoned decades earlier in some countries because of disease resistance, has been found to once again be **effective** in Malawi, say University of Maryland researchers (*N. Engl. J. Med.* **355**, 1959–1966).

**9 Nov** The FDA is planning to ease restrictions on **access to experimental drugs** for people with serious and otherwise untreatable diseases, the *Wall Street Journal* reports.

**9 Nov** Groups representing more than 37,000 scientists launch the European Coalition for Biomedical Research to draft guidelines for **ethics in animal research**, as the European Union plans to update its 20-year-old regulations.

**9 Nov** Prompted in part by last year's high-profile defibrillator recalls, the FDA announces that it will improve **medical device evaluation** by mining data from hospital safety reports and government health agencies.

**9 Nov** **Margaret Chan**, who led Hong Kong's public health department during the first human H5N1 outbreak in 1997 and was later lauded for helping to contain SARS, is elected to head the World Health Organization, the highest U.N. post ever held by a Chinese national.

**10 Nov** The prestigious **Kyoto Prize**, Japan's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, is awarded to Stanford University professor **Lee Herzenberg**, inventor of the laboratory staple Fluorescence-Activated Cell Sorter.

**10 Nov** **UK science minister** Lord Sainsbury resigns, but maintains that his departure is unconnected to allegations that his appointment was a reward for **political contributions**.

**13 Nov** The number of new **international students** at US colleges and universities increased by eight percent last year, marking the end of a three-year slide, according to a survey by the Institute of International Education.

**13 Nov** The FDA tells people to watch for signs of unusual behavior after taking **Tamiflu**, following Japanese reports of psychoses among those taking the flu drug.

**15 Nov** The World Health Organization launches a taskforce to tackle the global trade in **counterfeit medicines**, which each year cause thousands of deaths.

**15 Nov** Following a news report in *Nature Medicine*, Spain's Ministry of Science offers one-year contract extensions to Ramón y Cajal fellows who face unemployment (*Nat. Med.* **12**, 1106).