

medical reporting

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Our local reporter published information that likely originated from US lay publications almost certainly without checking to see what the Canadian experience and recommendations are. He or she recanted an amazing amount of angst in our patient population and an equal amount of professional discomfort in all of us caught broadside once again by a poorly researched piece of pseudoscientific journalism.

There are very good medical science journalists out there—I've met some of them. However, as always it's that small cohort of their colleagues who are too lazy to confirm their facts before sending it to print that really drive all of us crazy.

I don't know how the rest of you deal with the office chaos that results from irresponsible reporting in the lay press. However, there is a free BCMA e-mail service that you can use daily so you have a heads-up before the ball comes flying your way 20 seconds after walking through the front door of your office (it's called the News-Flash; e-mail vlee@bcma.bc.ca to be put on the distribution list).

Like all good boy scouts and girl scouts, it never hurts to be prepared.

—JAW

A world worth living in

17 December 2007

Canada and the United States have accepted the UN-sponsored Bali road map on global warming—finally.

There is no question that climate changes cyclically between warming and cooling. However, I do not think that any reasonable person would argue that greenhouse gases are not accelerating global warming to the point where huge ecosystems are changing dramatically with effects that are terrifying and terrifyingly unknown. The melting of the polar ice caps and the melting of permafrost are troubling examples.

There is also no question that it is a complex issue and that “emerging” countries like China and India drove a hard bargain for concessions but, let's face it, China is fast running out of water and the Asian subcontinent is facing famine from floods and rice shortages.

We North Americans have the biggest carbon footprint and it seems to me that if we have to cut back so that we can compensate South American Indians for not cutting down the rain forest or help developing nations (hardest hit by global warming) develop green technology, then so be it.

Despite the obvious importance of global warming, and our contributions to it, we seem to be reluctant, behind the front lines, followers rather than bold leaders.

We need to question every one of our politicians to try to address this problem as aggressively as possible so that our grandchildren have a world worth living in. We have to impress on them that this is not only the right thing to do but it is suicide if we don't.

—AJS

In Memoriam notices wanted

The *BCMJ* depends on you for the In Memoriam department. Please include birth and death dates, full name and the name the deceased was best known by, name of spouse and children (if any), key hospital and professional affiliations, and relevant biographical data. Photos cannot be published; notices should be less than 300 words and e-mailed to journal@bcma.bc.ca.