Eyes on Burnout

Gregory F. Hayden, MD
Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics
Etiology of acute conjunctivitis in children

• 99 children with conjunctivitis
• 102 age- and season-matched controls
• Agents statistically associated with conjunctivitis:
  • H. influenzae, nontypable (42% vs 0%)
  • Streptococcus pneumoniae (12% vs 3%)
  • Adenoviruses (20% vs 0%)

Seborrhoeic Blepharitis

• Rx: Keep the lids clean and remove the crusts by means of warm compresses and gentle scrubbing with dilute baby shampoo then water
Seborrheic Dermatitis—Looking beyond Malassezia

Experimental Dermatology, 2019; 28 (9): 991-1001.
Pediculosis Palpebrarum
(pediculosis ciliosis or phthriasis palpebrarum)

- Usually pubic lice and not head lice
- Apply unmedicated eye ointment to lid margins twice daily for ≥ 2 weeks to suffocate the lice
- Sensitive counseling resource and spread of lice
- Possibility of sexual contact/abuse, other STD’s
Burnout and the Covenant

• Most HCPs are not really burned out and want nothing more than to be able to take care of our patients.

• The covenant: We placed our trust in the medical profession, but that trust has been roundly trounced.

(Ofri D, Acad Med 2019)
Burnout: the Problem

 Corporatization of the profession has impinged upon doctors’ ability to practice medicine. The grafting of corporate leitmotifs such as “throughput” has re-formulated the health care system into an assembly line-style factory. Rather than prescribe Pilates classes for overstressed doctors, it is time for the medical profession to get a check-up.

(Ofri D, Acad Med 2019)
Burnout: the Problem

Physicians despair that the focus on costs has reduced them to cogs in the health care business machine, with daily reminders of ever-growing productivity expectations on top of crushing regulatory and clerical burdens.

(Noseworthy, *NEJM* 2019)
Pediatric Burnout

- Serwint JR, Stewart MT: Cultivating the joy of medicine: a focus on intrinsic factors and the meaning of our work.
- Stewart MT, Serwint JR: Burning without burning out: a call to protect the calling of medicine.

*(Curr Prob Pediatr Adolesc Hlth Care 11-12/2019)*
Work-Life Balance: A Useful Concept?

• Balancing work and life suggests work is bad and life is good, but they are not opposites.
• Work has uplifting moments and those that drag us down.
• The most helpful categories are not “work” and “life” but rather “love” and “loathe.”
• It is more useful to treat work the way you do life: by maximizing what you love.

(Buckingham M, Goodall A: Nine Lies about Work, 2019)
Burnout: A Few Suggestions

• Work can be wonderful and fulfilling; focus on the calling of medicine and the meaning of our work.
• Don’t escape but engage to address things at work that frustrate you so as to adjust the love/loathe balance.
• Help our profession honor the covenant and find a healthy balance between medicine as a service and medicine as a business.
• Get help for burnout if and when you need it.
References