

***Here are this week's health care news stories from AskaPatient (and we apologize for the delivery delay)***

- Anemia in early, but not late pregnancy is linked to higher rates of developmental disorders, including autism, ADHD, and intellectual disability. Lower iron levels after 30 weeks is common and does not have the higher risk.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-pregnancy-anemia/anemia-in-early-pregnancy-linked-with-risk-for-neurodevelopmental-disorders-idUSKBN1W52GI>

- Startup company Nebula will offer "pseudo-anonymous" DNA sequencing services for consumers, claiming its advantage over currently available genetic data profiling services which produce reports that are fairly easy to track to a person.

<https://www.statnews.com/2019/09/19/nebula-to-offer-anonymous-dna-sequencing/>

- U.S. House Speaker Pelosi unveiled a plan that would allow the Health and Human Services (HHS) secretary to negotiate prices for insulin along with between 25 and 250 brand-name drugs a year, making use of an "international price index."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/19/us/politics/pelosi-drug-prices.html>

- Reuters investigation finds that Merck downplayed the risk of long-term sexual side effects from hair loss drug Propecia.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-courts-secrecy-propecia-specialre/special-report-court-let-merck-hide-secrets-about-baldness-drugs-risks-idUSKCN1VW1TA> Patient reviews of Propecia (finasteride) reporting the side effect: <https://www.askapatient.com/viewrating.asp?drug=20788&name=PROPECIA&SideEffect=erectile+dysfunction>

- Reuters filed a "motion to intervene" in U.S. District Court, requesting that documents associated with the Propecia-related lawsuit be unsealed. The exhibits and redactions relate to long-term safety risks of the hair loss drug.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-courts-secrecy-unseal/reuters-asks-judge-to-release-secret-propecia-documents-idUSKCN1VX2IZ>

- UNC researchers have created an injectable, removable, and biodegradable drug implant that shows promise for delivering multiple drugs at once, for up to a year. For example, the device could be used for delivery of HIV prevention and treatment drugs.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/09/190920124650.htm>

- Efforts to stop the Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo have been complicated by various problems, including the arrest of Congo's former health minister for embezzlement of Ebola funds.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/16/health/ebola-congo-azar-fauci.html>

- Only about 100,000 Medicare diabetes patients in 2017 took advantage of nutrition counseling, even though millions were eligible for the benefit.

<https://khn.org/news/millions-of-diabetes-patients-are-missing-out-on-medicares-nutrition-help/>

- Type 2 diabetes drug Farxiga is now on the fast track to be approved for treatment of heart failure. Farxiga

generated \$1.39 billion in 2018 for Astra Zeneca. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-astrazeneca-farxiga-fda/astrazeneca-diabetes-drug-granted-fast-track-status-for-heart-failure-treatment-idUSKBN1W10HM>

Reviews of Farxiga for diabetes: <https://www.askapatient.com/viewrating.asp?drug=202293&name=FARXIGA>

- Terazosin HCL, a drug taken to treat enlarged prostate, also seems to slow progression of Parkinsons, according to researchers.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/09/190916160627.htm> Reviews of terazosin (brand name Hytrin) for BPH: <https://www.askapatient.com/viewrating.asp?drug=19057&name=HYTRIN>

- Study found that "off-label" prescribing of drugs for pediatric patients is common - occurring at about 40% of children's office visits where at least one drug is prescribed.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/09/190916081423.htm>

- Penn Medicine researchers developed a vaccine that protected mice and guinea pigs from becoming infected with genital herpes (HSV-2 virus).

[https://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2019-09/uops-npv092019.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2019-09/uops-npv092019.php)

- Amid growing concerns about e-cigarette safety, Walmart said it will stop selling the vaping products after it sells off its current inventory.

<https://time.com/5682929/walmart-stop-selling-e-cigarettes/>

- Novartis halted all shipments of Zantac (Ranitidine) due to discovery of NDMA contaminant.

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/09/19/health/novartis-ranitidine-impurity-zantac/index.html> Consumers have alternatives: see our article "H2 blocker, Antacid, or PPI?" <https://www.askapatient.com/news/otc-heartburn-stomach-acid-treatments.asp>

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