



The Cutting Edge

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Patients Reluctant To Change Surgeons Despite Lure Of Shorter Wait Times

Despite the possibility of shorter waiting times for surgery, a majority of patients were unlikely to consider changing surgeons, according to this cross-sectional study of 1200 patients who either were awaiting or had undergone hip or knee surgery. Despite a median waiting time of 8 months, 63% would elect to continue with their surgeons. This has implications for governments and healthcare policy makers in setting waiting-time guarantees. (Science Daily – August 18, 2008)

More at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/08/080811195305.htm>

Face Transplants Gaining Effectiveness

Transplanting faces may seem like science fiction, but doctors say the experimental surgeries could one day become routine. Two of the world's three teams that have done partial face transplants reported Friday that their techniques were surprisingly effective, though complications exist and more work is still needed. "There is no reason to think these face transplants would not be as common as kidney or liver transplants one day," said Dr. Laurent Lantieri, one of the French doctors who operated on a man severely disfigured by a genetic disease. (Associated Press – August 21, 2008)

More at

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/08/21/health/main4372386.shtml?source=RSSattr=HOME_4372386

**Studies: Video games can make better students, surgeons**

Parents, don't put away those video games just yet – today's gamer may be tomorrow's top surgeon. Researchers who gathered in Boston for the American Psychological Association convention detailed a series of studies suggesting video games can be powerful learning tools – from increasing younger students' problem-solving potential to improving the suturing skills of laparoscopic surgeons. One study even looked at whether playing "World of Warcraft," the world's biggest multiplayer online game, can improve scientific thinking. The conclusion? Certain types of video games can have benefits beyond the virtual thrills of blowing up demons. (Associated Press – August 18, 2008)

More at http://www.usatoday.com/tech/gaming/2008-08-18-video-games-learning_N.htm

Older Patients Less Likely to Be Taken to Trauma Centers

Older trauma patients are less likely to be transported to an official trauma center for immediate care than younger patients, a new study found. The finding was based on a review of a decade's worth of Maryland's statewide emergency medical services (EMS) records. And it suggests that the difference in care first comes into play as patients reach age 50 and worsens again at age 70. "I'm not sure I would call it a bias, because that word has negative connotations, but in general, people do seem to have unconscious blind spots when it comes to the elderly," said study lead author David Chang. (HealthDay News – August 18, 2008)

More at <http://www.waff.com/Global/story.asp?S=8860408>

Cosmetic surgeons blame hard times for slump in elective procedures

The cosmetic-surgery industry is in need of a lift. Soaring unemployment, high gas prices and the mortgage crisis have left consumers with less discretionary income. For plastic surgeons, that means fewer patients seeking elective procedures. "I think that people are scared. Everything's going up. Costs are going up. People are watching their pennies," said Dr. William Rassman, a surgeon for the New Hair Institute in Los Angeles and San Jose, Calif. Business is down 30 percent to 40 percent, Rassman said. (The Sacramento Bee – August 20, 2008)

More at <http://www.sacbee.com/103/story/1170420.html>

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