

# Nursing & Therapies Current Awareness



## Welcome to the October NTCA

This month we have articles on what's new in pharmacology.

Practice Nursing highlights tools, guidance and key events for general practice nurses.

An article from the BJN highlights the difficulties of under-reported conditions such as uterine prolapse.

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# First for Our Patients

## [British Journal of Midwifery](#)

The importance of good nutrition during pregnancy: a comparison between the UK and Brazil

The UK and Brazil both have sizable populations with significant demands on antenatal and maternity care. However, access to different healthcare professionals and knowledge regarding the importance of maternal nutrition vary widely between the two countries. This article compares the different approaches used in maternal nutrition between the UK and Brazil, seeking to share best practice and improve antenatal care.

## [International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation](#)

Association between leisure activities and sleep disturbances among children with and without cerebral palsy

Sleep disturbances are common among children with cerebral palsy, resulting in adverse consequences. Investigating the association between leisure activities and sleep disturbances could help to develop ways to promote their sleep quality. This study primarily aimed to investigate the association between leisure activities and sleep disturbances among children with and without cerebral palsy. The secondary aim was to study the prevalence of sleep disturbances and some of its associated factors.

## [British Journal of Midwifery](#)

The bidirectional relationship between breastfeeding and mental health

Breastfeeding rates in the UK are among the lowest in the world, despite its well-known benefits to maternal and infant health. The impact of breastfeeding on women's mental health may contribute to this. This study aimed to better understand the bidirectional relationship between breastfeeding and maternal mental health.

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## [International Journal of Palliative Nursing](#)

Experiences of emergency department nurses using palliative care resources and associated tools in the provision of quality care of a dying patient

Access to quality palliative and end-of-life care in the emergency department is as vitally important as care at any other stage of life. This study aimed to investigate nurses' perceptions of the use of a suite of dedicated resources to support the provision of care to patients who are dying in the emergency environment. The study followed a qualitative descriptive design; 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed using thematic coding. Five themes were developed: facilitating care delivery; comfort and environmental adjustments; visual symbolism; developing knowledge to overcome fear; and perceptions of family experiences. There is an increasing need to access palliative care in the emergency department; the use of a suite of resources can play an important role in the provision of quality care to the dying.

## [International Journal of Palliative Nursing](#)

### Reflecting on palliative care for children, young people and their families: a revised model

The unique needs of children requiring palliative care and their families have been increasingly recognised on a global scale. The complexities of such care, the unpredictability of the illness trajectory and increased choice in terms of where care is provided has led to challenges for nurses/practitioners striving to provide optimal care for these families. Working in partnership with children and families and reflecting on practice are key issues in providing care and support. Reflective models are frequently used as a tool for two reasons: firstly, to reflect on practice with the aim of quality improvement; secondly, to help practitioners explore difficult or challenging aspects of care negotiated with families. Here, the authors report on a specialised model that has been developed and updated for use within children's palliative care. For reasons of confidentiality, a fictitious case study is used to illustrate how this model could be implemented during a debriefing session following the death of a child. While more research is needed, initial trials of the model by the authors suggests that using specialised reflective models and frameworks can help to facilitate such discussions in children's palliative care.

## [International Journal of Palliative Nursing](#)

### The effects of a biofeedback and music training programme in reducing stress in Thai patients living with cancer receiving palliative care

**Aim:** To examine the effects of the biofeedback and music training programme (BMT programme) in decreasing stress among patients living with cancer receiving palliative care.

**Methods:** A randomised controlled trial (RCT) repeated measure study was used to investigate the effects of the BMT programme.

**Findings:** The participants in the BMT programme had the lowest mean stress recorded before, during and after the experiment, while the control group had a higher mean of stress in every measurement period. There were significant differences among groups across the time periods (Wilks' lambda =0.269, F=7.081, p<0.01).

**Conclusion:** Use of the BMT programme resulted in a significant reduction in patient stress. This confirms that the BMT programme plays an important role in helping patients living with cancer that experience high volumes of stress.

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## [Journal of Wound Care](#)

### Impaired wound healing in diabetes

Impaired wound healing for patients with diabetes is due to a constellation of structural, biochemical, cellular and microbial factors. Hyperglycaemia and its associated inflammation contribute to immune dysfunction, vascular damage, neuropathy, cellular senescence, impaired transition beyond the inflammatory stage, microbiome disruptions, failed extracellular matrix formation, growth factor and cytokine imbalance, limited re-epithelialisation, and alterations in fibroblast migration and proliferation. Optimising glycaemic control remains the primary intervention to prevent continual dysfunction and comorbid disease progression.

## [British Journal of Nursing](#)

### Uterine prolapse: impact of the condition and practical advice

Pelvic-organ prolapse is where organs such as the uterus move out of place; in some cases, they can protrude out of the body. It occurs when muscles extending from the pubic bone to the coccyx or the levator ani muscles become weak or are injured. Although it is not life-threatening, the condition can be life limiting, adversely affecting physiological processes, function and quality of life, with patients reporting years of pain, discomfort, humiliation and embarrassment. Uterine prolapse is often under-reported as women may feel resigned to a condition that is viewed as part of getting old or the menopause, or a consequence of childbirth; they may also feel embarrassed. Gynaecology has the fastest growing waiting lists of any NHS specialty, and women may wait a long time for treatment. This article focuses on uterine prolapse, management of symptoms from conservative self-help to surgical options, and includes a case study of a successful laparoscopic hysteropexy with bifurcated polypropylene mesh apical support procedure carried out by a skilled surgeon.

## [British Journal of Healthcare Assistants](#)

### Falls 3: how long-term conditions and acute illness increase the risk of falls

The world's population is ageing and as people age, they are more likely to develop one or more long-term conditions. These conditions can increase the risk of falls and ill-health. This article explores how long-term conditions can affect the risk of falls.

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## [British Journal of Healthcare Assistants](#)

### Haemorrhoids

Haemorrhoids are also known as piles. They are swellings containing enlarged blood vessels that are found inside or around the rectum and anus (abnormally swollen vascular mucosal cushions).

There are three vascular mucosal cushions located within the anus. These are present in healthy individuals, helping to maintain anal continence. When these mucosal cushions become enlarged and symptomatic, they are called haemorrhoids

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## [International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation](#)

### Factors influencing the use of aquatic therapy: perspectives from occupational therapists

Aquatic therapy has been identified as more conducive than land-based treatment options to improve health and quality of life in some patient populations. However, the prevalence of occupational therapists who implement aquatic therapy in practice is low. The aim of this study was to understand the perceptions of barriers and facilitators to aquatic therapy use by occupational therapists in the USA.

## [Journal of Prescribing Practice](#)

New research on treating obesity through medical and behavioural intervention.

Unfortunately, obesity is persistent and commonplace in today's society, resulting in global morbidity and mortality. Numerous medications have been studied to treat it, four of which shall be discussed in this article, followed by a section on the importance of behavioural intervention.

## [Journal of Prescribing Practice](#)

Considering green inhalers

With metered dosed inhalers accounting for 4% of UK NHS's overall carbon footprint, George Winter discusses the practicalities of switching to more carbon friendly options and the hurdles that still have to be tackled

Journal of Prescribing Practice

## [Journal of Prescribing Practice](#)

Using the British National Formulary app to support safe prescribing: a practical guide

This article is a practical guide to using the British National Formulary (BNF) and BNF for Children (BNFC) App more effectively, to support safe prescribing. It provides a brief overview of app layout and navigation. Features that support safe prescribing are then explored, focusing on drug monographs and the Interactions Checker tool; examples are used for illustration. Location of information that is particularly relevant to prescribers is highlighted. The BNF app provides prescribers with fast, convenient access to validated, current information. However, it may need to be supplemented by other sources, and knowledge is only one element of the competencies needed to be a safe, effective prescriber

## [Journal of Wound Care](#)

Evaluating nursing opinion and perception of maggot therapy for hard-to-heal wound management

Maggot therapy (MT) or larval debridement therapy is a recognised, effective but underutilised treatment for the management of hard-to-heal wounds and infected ulcers. It is available on NHS prescription in the UK, where wound management is predominantly nurse-led. Anecdotal reports and published literature suggest that nurses may be reluctant to utilise the therapy. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feelings and opinions of nurses regarding the use of MT.

## [Practice Nursing](#)

How to relate progestogen-only pill guidance to clinical practice

A new guideline for the use of progestogen-only pills has been published. Claire Nicol explains how this relates to clinical practice

The Clinical Effectiveness Unit (CEU) of the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH) regularly updates and develops national UK clinical guidelines relating to contraception. The updated FSRH progestogen-only pills (POPs) guideline was published in August 2022 and gives an overview of all POPs available in the UK. This article will highlight what is new or important in the guideline and how to relate the recommendations to clinical practice.

## [Practice Nursing](#)

Administering medications in general practice: what do non-prescribers need to know?

Administering medicines in general practice is often complicated for non-prescribers. **Allison Brindley** looks at the legal and professional boundaries around this complex topic

Misunderstandings and uncertainty around the professional responsibilities and legal requirements for non-prescribing general practice nurses (GPNs) when administering medications in general practice is an ongoing issue. This article reflects on practices of the past and the influences and drivers for GPN practice, helping to explain why this remains such a difficult concept. The legal and professional boundaries are explored and summarised into understandable and relatable terms, encouraging non-prescribing GPNs to make safe and considered decisions regarding the supply and administration of medicines. The dynamics of being employed by GPs can create tension for nurses in terms of meeting the expectations of the employer while working within professional boundaries.

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## [Practice Nursing](#)

Retaining nurses in general practice through mentorship

The need to attract new staff to general practice, as well as retain existing staff, is a nationwide problem. The Devon general practice nurse (GPN) workforce profile is heavily weighted towards retirement with 62% aged 50 years and above. To help address this, Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) started a legacy mentor programme. Sarah Hall, Practice Nurse Lead, and Sarah Harris, Primary Care Development Officer, led on this project.

## [Independent Nurse](#)

Urinary tract infections in children: A guide for primary care nurses

Urinary tract infections can potentially affect all ages, from the very young through to old age, however in babies and children they are a distressing occurrence for parents and a cause of concern for clinicians. Although they are usually easily resolved with treatment, in some cases, they can be recurrent and associated with complications. This article hopes to give nurses and non-medical prescribers some guidance on recognition, treatment and possible complications with the aim of giving them more confidence in diagnosis and management if the condition is suspected.

## [British journal of community nursing](#)

What is new in intermittent self-catherisation?

Intermittent self-catheterisation (ISC) is commonplace for those with long-term urinary retention issues. An intermittent catheter device is inserted regularly to void urine and it carries a lower risk of infection than an indwelling catheter ([National Institute for Health and Care Excellence \(NICE\), 2017](#)).

Those using an intermittent self-catheter device for more than 28 days were found by [NICE \(2017\)](#) to benefit most from reusable non-coated catheters, which are currently defined as single use. However, in order to make an 'off-license' recommendation to use this type of catheter device, higher quality evidence is required measuring incidence of infection, bacteraemia, mortality, comfort and preference, as well as quality of life, urethral damage and costs ([NICE, 2017](#)).

## [British journal of community nursing](#)

Moving with technological advancements: blood glucose monitoring from a district nurse's perspective

Capillary blood glucose monitoring is a standard safety protocol before administering insulin. Over the past 12 months, there has been a notable increase in patients under the district nursing service using a flash glucose sensor (FGS), which is a portable technological device inserted into the skin via a stamp-like mechanism. The device sits in the interstitial fluid under the skin; the device can be scanned using a sensor to obtain glucose readings, which can eliminate the need for capillary finger pricking. From experience, some people opt for this device, considering the pain and inconvenience associated with capillary finger pricking.

Despite some patients already utilising FGS, some community teams may still have to take a capillary finger prick before insulin administration, depending on local trust policy. Interestingly, while looking into the reasons for this, one discovered some contradictory concerns over the safety of FGS due to a difference in time lag, where interstitial fluid readings differ from blood glucose readings. However, new national guidelines reflect the push towards this technological innovation that could revolutionise patient care in glucose monitoring and diabetes management.

## [British journal of community nursing](#)

Red legs: how to differentiate between cellulitis, venous eczema and lipodermatosclerosis

Community nurses often encounter people with red legs. There are a number of reasons why an individual may develop red legs. The most common causes of red legs are cellulitis, venous eczema and lipodermatosclerosis. All have different causes and require different treatments. This article aims to enable readers to differentiate between these conditions which can appear similar, and to offer effective evidence-based care.

# First for Our Staff

## [British Journal of Midwifery](#)

Working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic for midwifery and nursing academics

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected teaching for nursing and midwifery academics, as it shifted from face-to-face to online teaching from home. However, their experiences and how this impacted their ability to fulfil their academic roles has not been reported. This study investigated midwifery and nursing academics' working from home experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and how this has impacted their ability to fulfil their academic roles.

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## [Practice Nursing](#)

Tools, guidance and key events for general practice nurses

## [Independent Nurse](#)

Making sense of a therapeutics randomised controlled trial

The aim of this article is to help the reader to feel more comfortable in analysing a paper reporting a drug trial and ultimately assessing whether the results have relevance for their clinical practice.

## [The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing](#)

Teaching Nurses How to Create a Personal and Professional Development Plan

Teaching nurses how to create a personal and professional development plan is important to help them structure measurable, obtainable personal and career goals. Meaningful goals and metrics for career growth are critical to nurses' professional development. As nurses learn about creating a personal and professional development plan, they can personalize their nursing journey. This column describes how professional development specialists can teach nurses to create a personal and professional development plan.

## [British Journal of Healthcare Management](#)

Knowledge of healthcare-associated infection management among emergency care nurses

Adequate education in healthcare-associated infection management and prevention is essential for healthcare workers. The majority of participants had sufficient knowledge of healthcare-associated infection management measures, but needed further improvement through regular educational programmes and implementation of infection management practices to maximise quality of care.

## Nursing Times

Evaluating experiences of a degree-level nursing apprenticeship—Abstract only.

Co-authored by Diane Last, Head of clinical education at West Suffolk Hospital

The degree-level nursing apprenticeship provides an alternative route to professional registration. This article discusses a study conducted halfway through a four-year apprenticeship, which explored the experiences of nursing apprentices, ward managers and practice education facilitators. Results suggested that apprentices felt well supported and appreciated receiving financial remuneration, and their confidence grew during their course. However, many found it difficult to achieve a good work-life balance and there were communication challenges early in the programme.

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## [British Journal of Nursing](#)

The diagnosis and management of acute hyponatraemia in critical care

Nurses working in critical care, consisting of the intensive care and high dependency units, will encounter a broad range of diseases and conditions. Therefore, a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of common presentations is required, especially for advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs). One of the most common electrolyte disturbances seen within these areas is hyponatraemia, affecting around 40% of patients in critical care and 30% of inpatients. It is important that ACPs working in this area are aware of the symptoms and recommended diagnosis and management.

## [NursingOpen](#)

Nursing students' perceived stress, self-efficacy, control and evaluation of a course in systematic clinical observation, physical assessment and decision-making: An observational study in Norway

**Aim:** Simulation-based nursing education interventions have a strong educational effect on psychomotoric skills, but students may experience physiological stress and anxiety during simulation. The aims of this study were to explore (1) nursing students' perceived stress, self-efficacy, control and evaluation before and after simulation as part a structured course in physical assessment, (2) whether factors such as gender, age or previous work experience were associated with perceived stress during simulation and (3) nursing students evaluation of the course.

**Design:** An observational, cross-sectional study before and after simulation and a course in physical assessment.

**Methods:** We utilized "the Self-Assessment Manikin for measuring emotion" before and after simulation, a questionnaire to identify symptoms of stress after simulation, and a questionnaire to evaluate the physical assessment course.

**Results:** A total of 59 students participated. Students perceived stress before simulation but reported a lower degree of activation, a more positive mood, increased feeling of control and self-efficacy after the simulation. They also felt more secure about their assessments. Even though students reported of several symptoms of stress before simulation, the course increased students' self-reported competence and feeling of security.

# First for The Future

## [Practice Nursing](#)

Cholesterol: how to measure and how to treat

Raised lipid levels are a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease. **Alison Pottle** provides an overview of how these are measured and the lifestyle measures and medications that can be used to reduce risk in these patients

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in England and Wales. Raised lipid levels are a significant risk factor for CVD. Lipids are a heterogeneous group of substances which include cholesterol, triglycerides, lipoproteins and apolipoproteins. The link between increased lipid levels and atherosclerosis was first established in the early 1900s. Numerous clinical studies have demonstrated the critical role of low density lipoproteins and other cholesterol-rich apolipoprotein-B containing lipoproteins in atherosclerotic plaque formation and the subsequent risk of CVD events. There is now clear indication that the lower the achieved LDL levels, the lower the risk of CVD. Multiple interventions including changes in lifestyle together with the use of lipid-lowering therapies may be required to achieve desired lipid levels, and practice nurses can play a key role in this. This article will discuss how cholesterol levels are measured and the treatment strategies now available.

## [British Journal of Community Nursing](#)

Skin tear prevention in older adults

Skin tears are common among the elderly population, both in hospital and in the community. Older adults are especially vulnerable since they experience a slower healing time and are at-risk of developing potentially complex and long-term problems. It is the duty of healthcare workers to recognise and prevent such risks.

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## [British Journal of Community Nursing](#)

The challenges homeless people face when accessing end-of-life care: what district nurses need to know

People experiencing homelessness have poorer physical and mental health compared with the rest of the population. Mortality rates are significantly higher, yet there is a dearth in suitable places for the delivery of palliative and end-of-life (EOL) care. Homeless people are being failed by the current healthcare system. The stigma associated with being homeless negatively impacts these marginalised people, affecting care given from healthcare professionals (HCP). Services are often inflexible and have little tolerance for substance misuse.

District Nurses (DN) are often experienced EOL care practitioners and well-placed to give person-centred care with a focus on collaborative decision-making. However, many homeless people die without input from DNs or specialist palliative support. It is important to understand why this is happening to address what can be done to help.

## [British Journal of Healthcare Assistants](#)

### Welcoming a fresh approach to women's health

For decades, UK healthcare has been dubbed an institution made by men for men, but the NHS is on the cusp of an integral change. While significant disparities between healthcare for women and men remain, a shift in political attitude, supported by a recognition that women and men have different health needs throughout their lives, should herald a new era of healthcare for women.

The challenge is not only in changing clinician awareness and understanding and creating better, more relevant pathways for female-specific health issues, but also encouraging women to demand better health outcomes, from puberty through fertility, menopause and beyond. Better information, combined with tailored, relevant service delivery, will be key to achieving the early intervention that underlines the preventative care model.

Alison Meadows, joint CEO, Priority Digital Health, celebrates the change and outlines the importance of a digital solutions platform that can integrate multiple health and wellbeing services to engage, educate and empower women of every age and facilitate better patient outcomes.

## [British Journal of Nursing](#)

### Learning beyond a single field of nursing through a virtual case-based approach to pre-registration nurse education

Ensuring that pre-registration student nurses gain the richness of clinical practice to allow them to feel confident and knowledgeable to care for patients of the 21st century is often a challenge. Clinical practice challenges often mean that students will be strategic learners. This article discusses the development of a virtual case-based learning site to provide a rich experience for students to learn.

## [British Journal of Nursing](#)

### Suicide and women living with and beyond a breast cancer diagnosis

Early diagnosis and intervention, and the use of targeted cancer treatments, have significantly reduced mortality from breast cancer. Emotional distress following a diagnosis of cancer is a normal and anticipated, but it may manifest in some individuals at some point as a level of anxiety or depression that significantly affects quality of life and coping. In extreme cases, these feelings can move from physical symptoms of low energy and an inability to complete basic tasks to despair and hopelessness. Confronting a cancer diagnosis is a life-changing experience, bringing a sense of vulnerability. This may create or precipitate a crisis that threatens to overwhelm a person, resulting in a negative impact on established coping mechanisms. There appears to be a paucity of literature on suicide or suicide attempts by people living with and beyond a cancer diagnosis. A literature search identified 19 papers on suicide and or suicide ideation in patients who had had a cancer diagnosis, which were included in the review. Two clear themes emerged from the literature: that a cancer diagnosis with or without pre-existing mental health comorbidities is a risk factor for suicide; and that there is a significant incidence and prevalence of anxiety and depression in cancer patient populations. The literature identifies multiple variables that impact on prevalence of mental health disorders after a breast cancer diagnosis. Despite this, there appears to be a lack of guidance at national level for screening for mental health comorbidities in patients with a cancer diagnosis.

### [British Journal of Nursing](#)

Ending healthcare's over-reliance on containment products and catheters Incontinence is becoming more and more prevalent across all our healthcare sectors. Commonly associated with elderly people, it is an ever-increasing problem across the entire population. It is estimated that more than 14 million people, including children of all ages, in the UK are experiencing some sort of bladder problem. Around 6.5 million people also have bowel problems ([Buckley and Lapitan, 2009](#); [Percival et al, 2021](#)). One in 10 of the UK's population live with faecal incontinence. The statistics for incontinence are higher among older women than diseases such as breast cancer, diabetes and heart disease ([Radzimińska et al, 2018](#)).

So if it is such a significant problem for the population, why is nobody talking about it?

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### [British Journal of Healthcare Management](#)

The role of total quality management in improving patient experiences and outcomes

Total quality management refers to efforts at all levels of an organisation to create and sustain an atmosphere in which employees can continuously develop their ability to provide on-demand products and/or services that customers find especially valuable. Total quality management has been used in the healthcare sector since the late 1980s. This study explores the impact of total quality management on patient experiences and outcomes, considering the different dimensions of total quality management: customer focus, total employee involvement, integrated systems, continual improvement, fact-based decision making and communication. Overall, total quality management was found to have a positive impact on patients, although further evaluation is needed regarding how total quality management has improved patient outcomes and experiences, and can continue to do so in the future.

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### [British Journal of Community Nursing](#)

Going paper-lite: housebound patient perspectives on the introduction of mobile working

Healthcare policies promote technology use as a means to modernise healthcare and support seamless, person-centred care. However, despite information technology (IT) use being common practice in clinical settings, its use in patients' homes is still developing. This study explored patients' perspectives on the use of IT and electronic health records (EHR) in their home environment. Semi structured interviews were conducted with housebound patients who received regular care from the district nursing team, and thematic data analysis was undertaken. Participants reported variable knowledge and experiences with mobile working and EHR. Most were positive and identified clear benefits for clinicians. However, few participants reported benefits to themselves. Contrary to popular belief, IT use is expected by older patients and, while barriers were identified, the overall opinion was positive. A digital divide was apparent, with some at risk of being disadvantaged by the increasing use of technology.

## Gastrointestinal Nursing

### Optimising endoscopy practice with artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to assist endoscopic practitioners by mimicking the process of human learning. It is hoped that AI significantly improves endoscopy practice from image interpretation to decision-making. AI translation between pre-clinical and clinical stages is overwhelmingly rapid, with the increased number of AI medical devices on the market. This trend especially stands out in the gastrointestinal (GI) endoscopy field. AI-assisted computer-aided detection (CADe) for colorectal polyps is already approved in many countries in the world, and similar CADe applications for upper-GI neoplasia, such as detection of Barrett dysplasia, are also available in Europe. AI-assisted computer-aided characterisation for colonoscopy is already available in Europe, Japan and other countries, which supports the characterisation of colorectal polyps, including the differentiation between neoplastic and non-neoplastic histology ([Weight et al, 2022](#)), as well as the prediction of invasive cancer ([Mori et al, 2021](#)).

**Don't forget to check out the online resources available to you through OpenAthens**

**ClinicalSkills.net** for all your clinical procedures

**BMJBest Practice** for symptom management and diagnosis

**Royal Marsden Manual** for more information on nursing skills and procedures

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