Heart model provides realistic feedback

A fine balance

New research shows that Vioxx—the blockbuster painkiller pulled from the market in 2004 because it increased the risk of heart attacks—reduces the risk of precancerous tumors in the colon and rectum. The findings, soon to be published in Gastroenterology, “show once again the potential for nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDS, to interfere with the development of cancer in the colon and rectum,” says DMS’s John Baron, M.D., who led the study. But the “serious toxicity” of Vioxx and similar drugs must be weighed carefully against their chemopreventive powers, he and his coauthors caution.

No bowl of cherries

It’s not surprising to learn that women newly diagnosed with breast cancer are often worried, nervous, fearful, and depressed. But little formal research has quantified those symptoms. A new Dartmouth-led study, published in Cancer, helps fill that gap in knowledge. Nearly half of newly diagnosed breast cancer patients showed high levels of emotional distress or met the criteria for psychiatric disorders, found DMS psychologist Mark Hegel, Ph.D., and his collaborators. “Future research should refine current screening procedures and develop interventions,” they say.