

APP-LAUSE! The National Center for PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), based at the Dartmouth-affiliated White River Junction, Vt., VA Medical Center, developed a mobile phone app (Google "PTSD Coach mobile app") to help PTSD patients manage symptoms anytime, anywhere.



MEDIA MENTIONS: DMS & DHMC IN THE NEWS

Among the people and programs coming in for prominent media coverage in recent months was a Dartmouth neurologist, Dr. **Elijah Stommel**. A feature in *Discover* magazine about amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), known as Lou Gehrig's disease, highlighted Stommel's research on the connection between ALS and an environmental toxin produced by blue-green algae.



"A couple of years ago, in an effort to gain more insight into the disease," the magazine reported, "Stommel enlisted students to punch the street addresses of about 200 of his ALS patients into Google Earth. The distribution of cases that emerged . . . shocked him. In numbers far higher than national statistics predicted, his current and deceased patients' homes were clustered around lakes and other bodies of water." (For more on Stommel's work, see dartmed.dartmouth.edu/f09/v01.)

Forbes asked a Dartmouth orthopaedic surgeon for comment on a conflict-of-interest scandal involving the medical device company Medtronic. On every large study of the device in question, "at least one author had received at least \$10 million in royalties, consulting, or other payments," *Forbes* reported.



"**Sohail Mirza**, of Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, calls the FDA approval studies for the product 'folly.'" Mirza expanded on that point in a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article: "I'm concerned that the published reports don't match up with the FDA data," he said. "Our standard in medicine is to use the published literature to counsel patients."

A seven-year study on the effectiveness of using CT scans to screen for lung cancer made the news, with two Dartmouth faculty members getting tapped to comment on it. "Dr. **William Black** (pictured below), who



headed the Dartmouth Medical School branch of the National Lung Screening Trial" told ABC News that "CT screening may prove to be a game-changer" for patients with a history of heavy smoking. But, noted the Associated Press (AP), "there's a good chance of a false alarm." Still, the benefits of the scans seem strong enough, went on the AP report, that "the question has changed to how are we going to do this,' not whether we should," said Dr. **Harold Sox**, a Dartmouth professor who used to head the government task force that shapes policy on screening tests." Sox wrote an editorial that was published alongside the study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and helped journalists understand the issues that the study raises. "There are about 94 million smokers or former smokers in the United States," Sox told WebMD, "and screening even a portion of them would be very expensive."

U.S. News & World Report brought attention to a study in the journal *Pediatrics* that showed that over half of pediatricians don't check toddlers for developmental delays. "There's more and more evidence that starting early intervention can make a big difference in developmental outcomes than if we wait,' explained study coauthor Dr. **Nina Sand-Loud**, an assistant professor of pediatrics and a developmental-



behavioral pediatrician at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center." Sand-Loud said that "current recommendations call for developmental screening at nine, 18, and either 24 or 30 months during well-child visits."

When the *Wall Street Journal* covered the latest developments in sleep medications, it turned to a Dartmouth sleep expert for comment. The paper explained that the



most common sleep-aid medications, known as GABA drugs, can have serious side effects, can be addictive, and can become less effective over time. "Often you get the story that it worked for a few weeks, then it stopped working and [the patient has] to take more,' says **Michael Sateia**," a professor of psychiatry at Dartmouth and a nationally recognized expert in sleep medicine.

An extensive literature review by a DMS professor 10 years ago received fresh coverage in a *Huffington Post* article about how to stay hydrated during the summer.



"In 2002, Dartmouth Medical School physician Dr. **Heinz Valtin** set out to examine the roots behind the popular 'drink eight glasses of water a day' maxim," the *HuffPost* noted. "The subsequent review, which was published in the *American Journal of Physiology*, concluded there were no scientific studies supporting that rule. In an e-mail to the *HuffPost*, Valtin wrote that to date, no one has presented him with new data that suggests otherwise."

