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SOFT, STRONG AND VERY COLD

An article in *Science* describes how a new implantable device may be used to provide relief from chronic neuralgia by local cooling. Focused cooling is an attractive strategy because it is not addictive, is rapidly reversible and should not have systemic effects (figure 1). Not only is it ‘soft’ but it is also naturally absorbed—and has the potential for real-time feedback. Is this procedure ready for the prime time? While the illustrations in the article are clearly a human arm, the experiments they publish are on rats.

Science. 2022;377(6601):109-115.



Figure 1 Soft, bioresorbable coolers for reversible conduction block of peripheral nerves. Photograph: Northwestern University/PA.

DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO

Academia gets stereotyped as a ‘dog-eat-dog’ world of paranoia and suspicion; so what happens when authors and funders insist that researchers make their data available to others in the field? On the face of it, they say what is needed to the journal Editors to get published, but then behave very differently when asked for these data. In 3556 articles, from 333 open-access journals, 3416 contained a data availability statement (DAS). 42% of DAS

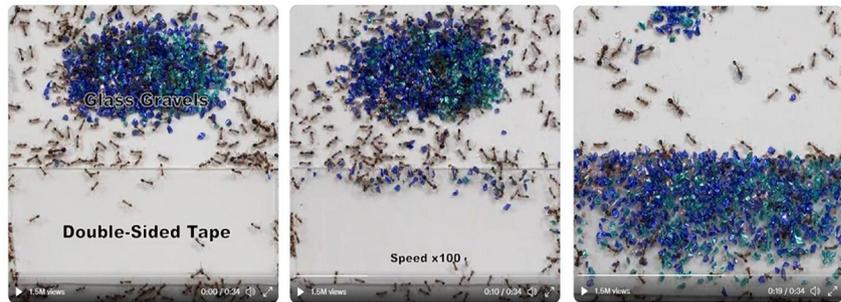


Figure 2 Stills taken from https://youtu.be/hjV_Uve-OYY showing Fire Ants ‘paving’ sticky surfaces.

indicated that the data sets are available on reasonable request. When requested, 93% authors either did not respond or declined to share their data. Of the 254 (14%) of authors who responded, only 122 provided data. Or does this article show that email is a terrible way to communicate with busy researchers?

J Clin Epidemiol. 2022;S0895-4356(22)00141-X.

MYSTIC MEDIC

Are you Nostradamus of the no show? Derren Brown of the DNA? One of the best predictors of future behaviour, is past behaviour. Can you tell who would fail to attend a paediatric epilepsy clinic ahead of time? Using a least absolute shrinkage and selection operator model trained on electronic health record (EHR) data, authors from Ohio identified several factors (including private insurance, inactive EHR and greater past no-show rates) as predictors. Their model had a positive predictive value of 48%. They went on to assign a score for every patient, arguing that

those with the highest scores can be identified ahead of time by social workers to facilitate clinic attendance.

J Child Neurol. 2022;37(7):582–588.

CO-DEPEND-ANT

A Fo Ben would consider it too hackneyed to watch the behaviours of a community of fire Ants and try to draw parallels to team working and shared goals in medicine. However, this video (figure 2) of red imported fire ants using glass particles to coat an accessible area is beautifully hypnotic; for the science behind it read the linked paper by Wen *et al* where they use sausage as the food reward for these industrious wee beasts.

Insect Sci. 2021;28(6):1816–1828.

Competing interests None declared.

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