

THIS WEEK IN CHEMISTRY

19TH JULY - 25TH JULY 2015

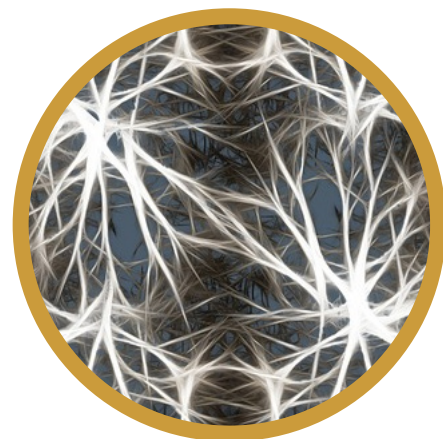
MOLECULE COULD HELP REDUCE OR ELIMINATE CATARACTS

Lanosterol, a cholesterol-like molecule, has been shown to reduce the severity of cataracts in dogs, and could lead to the first non-surgical treatment for the disease. However, aspects of the research have been criticised; more comprehensive studies are still needed.



MIXED RESULTS FOR ANTI-ALZHEIMER'S DRUGS

Two trials on antibodies that latch on to beta-amyloid proteins in Alzheimer's sufferers had mixed results, with one suggesting a minor slow in cognitive decline, whilst the other failed to show significant effects on cognition. Further follow-up trials are planned.



BLUE LEDS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CHEMICAL PRESERVATIVES

Blue light emitting diodes have been shown to be effective against major food pathogens, and could be used in future in place of chemical preservatives in some cases. The LEDs were particularly effective at low temperature and acidic pH.



MOST PRECISE FIGURE FOR AVOGADRO'S NUMBER YET

Two previous measurements of Avogadro's number have been averaged in a new analysis to obtain a new value with an uncertainty of 20 atoms per billion. The original measurements were made by counting the number of atoms in two 1kg silicon spheres.



FLOWING NITROGEN GLACIERS SPOTTED ON PLUTO

NASA's New Horizons mission has observed nitrogen, methane and carbon monoxide ices on Pluto which show evidence of long-term flow. The temperature below the surface may even be high enough for a liquid nitrogen 'ocean' to exist.



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