

THIS WEEK IN CHEMISTRY

24TH JULY 2016 – 30TH JULY 2016

Links to articles & studies for the featured stories are provided at: <http://goo.gl/kE5GeR>



PIGEONS CAN BE USED TO MONITOR CITY LEAD POLLUTION

US researchers found that trends in blood lead levels of pigeons matched those in children living in the same zip code areas, suggesting they could be used to track lead levels. Zip codes with the highest pigeon lead levels showed the the highest levels in children.



NEW ANTIBIOTIC PRODUCED BY HUMAN NOSE BACTERIA

The battle between bacteria in human noses is a suprising source for a new antibiotic – the first from a bacterium that lives primarily in people. Lugdinin, a cyclic peptide, is made by *Staphylococcus lugdunensis*, found in the nasal passages of some humans.



HYDROGEL HELPS MAKE BURNS BANDAGES EASIER TO REMOVE

Having bandages removed after a burn injury is a painful experience, with the bandage needing to be cut away. A new method circumvents this with a hydrogel that can be easily removed by applying a solution of cysteine methyl ester. Human trials are soon to begin.



UNDERSTANDING WHY ANTIDEPRESSANTS TAKE SO LONG TO WORK

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressants can take weeks or months to start exerting their effects. US researchers found this might be because they force signalling G proteins out of 'lipid rafts' in cell membranes, but take a while to accumulate in these rafts.



VENUS FLY TRAP INSPIRES SNAPPING SMART MATERIAL

Chinese scientists have invented a smart material inspired by the venus fly trap, which switches shape rapidly in response to changes in acidity or temperature. Though such snapping materials have been made previously, theirs is the first which can snap reversibly.

