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4 Read the article. 3-08

Emerging Medical Breakthroughs

Virtual Reality (VR) is quickly becoming a massive part of the medical industry. It is currently being used to aid in education and physical therapy. For example, a company called Ghost Productions offers 3-D animated content that medical professionals can access via VR headsets. Users claim that the company's technology is far more helpful and detailed than what textbooks and videos offer. [a] This technology is going to allow medical professionals to gain more knowledge and be better trained, thus helping them deal with real-life patients.



Another example of VR technology in the medical industry comes from a company called VR Health Group. This company is currently using VR to aid in physical therapy. Anyone who has ever broken a bone knows that time must be spent strengthening the part of the body that was affected. [b] People typically visit physical therapists for this. At such offices, patients get treatment where they have to do repetitive exercises and stretches to regain strength. Many patients get anxiety over this due to factors like boring exercises and difficulty in maintaining the proper positions. However, the VR Health Group has taken the anxiety out of physical therapy. The company's VR programs allow patients to play fun games which ensure patients properly perform exercises and stretches. Doctors hope that with this kind of treatment, the stress related to physical therapy will be taken away.

Drug companies will also be making groundbreaking advances in the medical industry soon. For example, the Japanese company Shionogi & Co. recently created a pill that gets rid of the flu within 24 hours. Up until now, the only real treatments for the flu have been preventive flu shots and drugs that just lessen the effects of flu symptoms. [c] In the near future, though, no one is ever going to have to deal with scary needles, flu shots, or ineffective medicine ever again. We will all be taking a flu pill to get better faster.

Another potential breakthrough in the drug industry is probably going to come from a company called Decibel Therapeutics. This company will soon be developing a pill that treats hearing loss. Currently, people with hearing problems—old and young alike—have to wear uncomfortable devices in their ears. Even worse, those devices often suffer from malfunctions and battery loss. [d] If they succeed, Decibel Therapeutics will have changed the entire industry. The door will be opened for other drug companies to start developing pills that cure conditions from poor eyesight to memory loss. We aren't going to be taking pills just for headaches and infections in the future. The possibilities are endless.



1. What is one of the primary benefits of using Virtual Reality (VR) in the medical industry according to the passage?

a) It replaces the need for textbooks and videos.
b) It helps medical professionals gain more knowledge and be better trained.
c) It is cheaper than traditional medical education tools.
d) It eliminates the need for physical therapists.

2. Which company is mentioned in the passage as using VR for physical therapy?

a) Ghost Productions
b) VR Health Group
c) Shionogi & Co.
d) Decibel Therapeutics

3. What problem does VR Health Group aim to solve with their VR programs for physical therapy?

a) The high cost of physical therapy
b) The shortage of physical therapists
c) Patient anxiety related to repetitive exercises and stretches
d) Lack of entertainment for patients

4. What is the expected benefit of the new flu pill created by Shionogi & Co.?

a) It eliminates flu symptoms within 48 hours.
b) It prevents the flu from ever occurring.
c) It gets rid of the flu within 24 hours.
d) It reduces the need for flu vaccinations.

5. According to the passage, what innovation is Decibel Therapeutics working on?

a) A pill that prevents all types of infections.
b) A device that improves hearing without batteries.
c) A pill that treats hearing loss.
d) A treatment that enhances memory.

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