maintain a method that will give an approximation of the plasma concentration of conjugated bilirubin which would be adequate for patient care and therefore the method used for conjugated bilirubin analysis should not affect the decision of which method to use for total bilirubin analysis.

We are most grateful for the work by the laboratories who participated in the surveys. We would also wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Australian Association of Clinical Biochemists and the Royal College of Pathologists of Australia on whose behalf we carried out the Australian and New Zealand surveys.

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Reports and Bulletins prepared by the Association of Clinical Biochemists
The following reports and bulletins are published by the Association of Clinical Biochemists. They may be obtained from The Publishing Department, British Medical Journal (AB Technical Bulletins), BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Overseas readers should remit by British Postal or Money Order.

Scientific Reviews (price £1.00/$2.00 each)
1 The assessment of thyroid function March 1971 FV FLYNN and JR HOBBS
2 Renal function tests suitable for clinical practice January 1972 FL MITCHELL, N VEALL, and RWE WATTS
3 Biochemical tests for the assessment of foetalplacental function May 1975 CE WILDE and RE OAKLEY
4 Test of exocrine pancreatic function March 1977 AH GOWENLOCK
5 Assay of cholinesterase in clinical chemistry March 1979 ELSE SILK, J KING, and MARY WHITTAKER

Technical Bulletins (price £1.00/$2.00 each)
22 Bilirubin standards and the determination of bilirubin by manual and technicon AutoAnalyzer methods January 1971 BARBARA BILLING, RUTH HASLAM, and N WALD
23 Interchangeable cells for spectrophotometers and fluorimeters September 1971 SS BROWN and AH GOWENLOCK
24 Simple tests to detect poisons March 1972 BW MEADE et al.
25 Blood gas analysers May 1972 K DIXON
26 Kits for enzyme activity determination September 1972 SB ROSALIKI and D TARLOW
27 Assessment of pumps suitable for incorporation into existing continuous flow analytical systems November 1972 A FLECK et al.
28 Routine clinical measurements of transferrin in human serum September 1973 K DIXON

29 Control materials for clinical biochemistry (5th edition) September 1973 JF STEVENS
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31 Determination of uric acid in blood and in urine July 1974 RWE WATTS
32 A survey of amino acid analysers readily available in the United Kingdom September 1974 JE CARLYLE and P PURKISS
33 Definitions of some words and terms used in automated analysis November 1974 A FLECK, R ROBINSON, SS BROWN, and JR HOBBS
34 Measurement of albumin in the sera of patients January 1975 LINDA SLATER, PM CARTER, and JR HOBBS
35 Investigation of the validity of temperature correction factors for serum aspartate and alanine transaminases March 1975 SB ROSALIKI et al.
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37 A survey of enzyme reaction rate analysers readily available in the United Kingdom July 1977 RA SAUNDERS and RF BURNS
38 Transport of specimens for clinical chemistry analysis November 1977 P WILDING, JF ZILVA, and CE WILDE
39 A scheme for the evaluation of diagnostic kits May 1978 PH LLOYD
40 A practical guide to gamma-counting in radioimmunoassay January 1980 CE WILDE and D OTTENWELL
41 The use of biochemical tests in the diagnosis of disorders of calcium metabolism July 1980 ANGELA FAIRNEY
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Cytological diagnosis of lymphoma in serous effusions  
AI SPRIGGS, RI VANHEGAN

Use of antisera to epithelial membrane antigen for the cytodiagnosis of malignancy in serous effusions  
A TO, DV COLEMAN, DP DEARNALEY, MG ORMEROD, K STEELE, AM NEVILLE

Mast cells in the human alveolar wall: an electron-microscopic study  
B FOX, TB BULL, AG GUZ

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D LOWE, JOHANNA JORIZZO, MSR HUTT

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Comparison of a modified microagglutination technique for HBsAg with the standard technique and a new RIA system  
E MARGARET SUPRAN, PS GARDNER, I CAYZER, G COURT, S CHALMERS

Technical method  
An in vitro assay of thrombolysis using 125I-fibrinogen  
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Letters to the Editor

Book reviews

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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON WC1H 9JR, price £3·00, including postage
the interface between ultrastructure, pathology, and clinical medicine. Volume 5 includes chapters on the heart, blood, and lymphatic vessels, the thymus, the blood, the bone marrow, lymph nodes, and spleen. Volume 10 covers the pituitary, thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal glands, and the endocrine pancreas. As before, the quality of the production of these volumes is sumptuous with paper and printing of the highest quality. At times, in Volume 5, the layout results in an unusual amount of blank paper, amounting to over 10% of the print area. The quality of the electron micrographs is in general very high, although some of the illustrations seem to have been reproduced rather too large for comfort.

As often in edited multiauthor volumes, the scope and quality of the individual contributions varies quite widely. In Volume 5 the sections by Ferrans on the heart, Levine and Bearman on the thymus, and Bruning and Maldonado on blood and bone marrow are particularly well done. On the other hand, Leak's scholarly review of vascular ultrastructure, largely based on material from laboratory animals, lacks detailed comment on how far these results can be extrapolated to man. Even more disappointing, in a book centred on "Human Medicine", is the absence of any description of vascular pathology. The important group of neoplasms of the vascular endothelium and pericytes are not mentioned.

In Volume 10 the thyroid and parathyroids are comprehensively reviewed by Gould, Johanssen and Sobrinho-Simoes, and by Altenähr while some other sections, such as the pituitary and the endocrine pancreas are disappointingly brief.

In a series as ambitious as this it is almost impossible to maintain uniformity of standards and approach in the different sections. Perhaps these volumes could have benefited from more aggressive editing. Nevertheless there is much of value in these books and in the series as a whole. The professional electron microscopist will certainly want to add them to his reference shelf.

PG TONER


The various methods which can be used for making a rapid diagnosis of an acute viral infection are described in this WHO technical report. These are immuno-fluorescence, electronmicroscopy, enzyme labelled and radio-labelled immunosorbent assays (ELISA & RIA), reverse passive haemagglutination, and the detection of specific IgM. The basis of each is briefly outlined and an evaluation is made of the advantages and disadvantages of each technique in terms of expense of equipment, shelf-life of reagents, ease of operation, and sensitivity. A second section indicates which of the methods are appropriate for use in different disease systems such as respiratory tract infections, gastroenteritis, hepatitis, sexually transmitted, CNS, skin, eyes, and arbo-virus infections.

This booklet will be found useful by virologists in the clinical field who wish to know which methods will be most appropriate for their needs.

MS PEREIRA


The authors are a clinical neurologist with experience in muscle biopsy pathology and a clinical neurophysiologist. Between them they have produced a broad, up-to-date account of neuromuscular disease which is not only a practical guide to diagnosis and treatment but also a good reference text with an extensive bibliography. The first section of the book deals with the structure and physiology of normal nerves and muscles. This is followed by a section on the basic principles of electromyography and neuromuscular pathology. By far the largest section of the book is a well written and clear account of the clinical aspects, neurophysiology, and pathology of the wide range of nerve and muscle disorders. Almost unique in its concept and approach, this book will be of considerable value to pathologists and clinicians involved in the diagnosis and treatment of neuromuscular disorders.

RO WELLER

Notices

Symposia in Basic Gastroenterology

The Third Symposium in this series was entitled “Adaptation—pathophysiology of intestinal response to disease,” organised by the Royal Postgraduate Medical School in collaboration with the Medical Department of Glaxo Group Research, will be held in London on 23 March 1982. The organisers are JM Polak, SR Bloom, NA Wright, MJ Daly. For information, please write to: Dr MJ Daly, Glaxo Group Research, Ware, Herts SG12 0DJ.