Rapid ELISA for detecting Epstein-Barr virus infection

We read with interest the assessment of the rapid ELISA test (Monolert—Ortho Diagnostic Systems, New Jersey, USA) for detecting Epstein-Barr virus infection and report a case of parvovirus infection which also gave a false positive result with this test.

The child presented with spontaneous bruising and had thrombocytopenia (platelets 20 x 10^9/l). A bone marrow examination showed increased megakaryocytes, slight haemophagocytosis, and a total absence of recent precursors. A monospot test was positive and the rapid ELISA test for EBV infection was positive for an acute infection. IgM antibody to parvovirus was present in high titre (greater than 40 units). No EBV IgM antibody was detected, but IgG antibody to EBNA was positive in low titre. Thus despite the positive monospot and monolert results, there was no serological evidence for an acute EBV infection.

Mattheson et al found false positive results with adenovirus, cytomegalovirus, and Toxoplasma gondii infections. Our case suggests that parvovirus infection may also cross-react and we agree that this test has limitations.


The stated aim of this textbook is to combine classic histological approaches to endoclinic pathology with recent developments in immunohistochemistry and molecular biology. In attempting to achieve this, the authors have produced a single author textbook, covering the breadth of the endoclinic system, Dr Lloyd has set himself a formidable task. He admits that certain areas have not been covered.

The text is variable. For example, there is a useful short, but comprehensive, discussion of the new classification of cutaneous adenomas, based on immunohistochemistry and electron microscopy. In contrast, the problematic area of diagnostic acanthoma in adenosclerosis tumours is incompletely discussed and referenced. The book is extensively illustrated. There are very elegant colour plates of immunocytochemistry and non-isotopic in situ hybridisation, but some of the black and white photomicrographs are not as crisp as might be expected.

This volume must be compared with others based on a functional approach to the subject, which incorporate more of the clinical and biochemical aspects of endoclinic disease. Perhaps to a greater extent than in any other area of pathology, histological diagnosis cannot stand alone. I feel, therefore, that this textbook will not be seriously competitive.

AM McNicol


The first edition of this text sits on my shelf but is rarely consulted, for useful information is obtained more easily elsewhere. Two of the authors have changed and this is now virtually a new work rather than just a new...

This is a strange book which, on first looking through it, I wondered whether it even ought to have a review as the bibliography has no reference to a book published after 1981, although there is a recommended reading list including articles up to 1984. In the preface this situation is accounted for "due to technical reasons," but suggests that the monograph "is a very valuable collection and evaluation of important facts in the "lipid field" up to that time." Peter Schwandt is not the sole author—there are contributions from P Weisweiler, P Janetschek, and WO Richter.

Topics covered include atherogenesis and its effects, risk factors, metabolism of lipoproteins and diagnosis of their disorders, diet, physical exercise and treatment. I have to admit, when I studied its contents again a little later I changed my opinion. I found much of the early work clearly presented, interesting and informative, and well referenced. I hope that this monograph will not only be purchased by libraries but also by all those interested in the "arterial lipidoses".

B S T AVIN


This is volume 356 in the series Progress in Clinical and Biomedical Research. It is based on the proceedings of the Third International Conference on Megakaryocytes which was held in Dijon in July 1989. The work is edited by recognised experts in the field of megakaryocyte and platelet biochemistry and physiology.

Recent years have seen considerable advances in our knowledge of the physiology of platelet production, aided by the development of techniques for the isolation of megakaryocytes from bone marrow, the establishment of megakaryoblastic cell lines, and the cloning of growth factors. This, together with the increasing realisation of the central role of platelets in arterial occlusive disease, have led to considerable expansion in research related to megakaryocytes and platelet production. This volume thus serves as a timely review of contemporary theories and observations on the maturation, regulation, and pathology of megakaryocytes. It is, of course, primarily a book for the specialist researcher, and in this context can be recommended as an invaluable reference source, but it also contains much of relevance to the pathologist with a broad interest in the pathogenesis of bleeding and thrombotic disorders.

M G REAVES


This book is a series of 53 cases presented initially as macro- and microscopic descriptions illustrated with black and white photographs. We are then given a "pivot" diagnosis, followed by a list of differential diagnoses, and an illustrated discussion. Only after this is the clinical history given and the chapter closes with a "denouement" and a small further discussion and list of pertinent references. This idiosyncratic arrangement with the concentration on unprejudiced, supposedly objective assessment of the material, before exposure to the bald clinical facts, leads in most cases to a rational pivot diagnosis but occasionally, is analogous to composing "wrong" answers to multiple choice questions; the alternatives are a little implausible.

The authors address themselves to most of the range of fashionable problems in this subspecialty. The chapters on conjunctival melanocytic lesions are particularly clear. Examples of systemic pneumocytosis and Kaposi's sarcoma are included in AIDS related phenomena as is the diagnosis of necrotising retinitis. Most of the references are recent but some are unnecessarily parochial referring to ophtalmological bibliography but elsewhere the authors have quoted from mainstream pathology and medical journals. Grouses? Two: I did not know what the torcular Herophilus was and had to go and look it up; and in the introduction the authors refer to a "heristic void," something which seems to be a philosophical impossibility.

I recommend the book and think that the authors have produced a convincing diagnostic algorithm in most instances. The non-specialist would also enjoy it, gaining in confidence by realising that this is not an isolated or impenetrable field of histopathology.

ACE McCARTNEY

NOTICES

Tenth Annual Scientific Meeting and Exhibition of the Society of Magnetic Resonance in Medicine
August 10–16, 1991
San Francisco, California, USA.

For more information, contact SMRM, 1918 University Avenue, Suite 3C, Berkley, CA 94704 USA. Telephone: (415) 841-2340.

First World Congress of Cellular and Molecular Biology
1–7 September 1991
Paris–Versailles, Palais des Congres

This meeting will include about 40 symposia concerning the most promising themes in the field of cellular and molecular biology. All information about the programme, registration, fees, and deadlines for abstracts, will be given on request by letter, phone or fax:
Mrs Leila Orbecchi, Director
C.E.R.T.
63, Avenue Parmentier
75 011 PARIS—France
Tel.: (1) 48 07 07 00
Fax: (1) 48 07 22 11

Prize Biochemical Analysis 1992

The German Society for Clinical Chemistry awards the prize Biochemical Analysis every two years at the conference "Biochemische Analytik" in Munich.

The prize of DM50 000 is donated by Boehringer Mannheim GmbH for outstanding and novel work in the field of biochemical analysis or biochemical instrumentation or for significant contributions to the advancement in experimental biology especially relating to clinical biochemistry.

Competitors for the prize 1992 (conference "Biochemische Analytik", May 5–May 8 1992) should submit papers concerning one theme, either published or accepted for publication, between 1 October 1989 and 30 September 1991, before 15 October 1991, to: Professor Dr H Feldmann, Secretary of the prize Biochemical Analysis; Institut für Physiologische Chemie der Universität, Goethestrasse 33, D-8000 München 2.

If several authors are involved in this work, please indicate the name(s) of the candidate(s).

ACP Locum Bureau

The Association of Clinical Pathologists runs a locum bureau for consultant pathologists.

Applicants with the MRCPath who would like to do locums and anyone requiring a locum should contact The General Secretary, School of Biological Sciences, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9QC. Tel and Fax: 0273 678435.