dency towards thrombosis.¹² The uncontrolled release of pancreatic lipase and fat necrosis in acute pancreatitis may lead to a further increase in serum NEFA concentration. The low serum albumin concentrations occurring in acute pancreatitis¹³ would accelerate the rate of decay of PGI₂,¹⁴ especially in the presence of raised serum NEFA concentrations.^{14,15}

These factors would further enhance platelet hyperaggregability. More extensive ischaemic pancreatic damage may then occur leading to further release of pancreatic enzymes, thus setting up a vicious circle.

The mechanisms we suggest are consistent with Dr Foulis' conclusion that hypothermia may lead to pancreatic damage with an ischaemic pattern.¹

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Gliding motility of *Acinetobacter anitratus*

There is evidence^{1,2} to suggest that *Acinetobacter anitratus* syn *A. calcoaceticus* can glide on the surface of solid media. This property was noted by one³ of us in batch 2 of NCTC 7844 strain of *A. anitratus*. On inoculation on a MacConkey plate, the latter produced 1.5–2 mm diam lactose-fermenting compact colonies on the surface of the medium in 18–24 h at 37°C. The plate was then kept at room temperature for 18–24 h. This led to the development of many thin thread-like convexly arched offshoots around the periphery of the compact colonies. Hanging-drop preparations of the offshoots showed many rod-like forms attaching by one end to the undersurface of coverslip and performing fast pendular type flexion and extension movement by the distal freely hanging end. This type of movement had been reported by Baur⁴ in myxococci and was responsible for the development of the convexly arched offshoots. This movement gradually became sluggish till it was lost in 7–10 days in the culture maintained on nutrient agar slopes at room temperature. It was not seen however, in the next two batches of the NCTC strain and in local isolates of *A. anitratus*.⁵ However gliding motility could be induced in batch 4 of the NCTC strain and in 10 local isolates of *A. anitratus* on peptone-deficient (0.1% Bacto-peptone) agar (1.5% Bacto agar) slopes kept moist by covering

the surface with a thin layer of phosphate buffer of pH 7.2–7.4 ± 0.2. The buffer not only kept the surface of the medium moist but also provided the ideal pH for the development of gliding motility in 18–24 h. A loopful of the growth occurring during this time was taken in the buffer and put between coverslip and slide and seen under the low and high power of a microscope for evidence of gliding motility. Microscopic examinations showed a large number of coccobacillary forms following each other, gliding to and fro slowly over the surface of the slide in the direction of their longitudinal axis towards the periphery of coverslip where air was present. The cells changed their direction occasionally on encountering non-mobile cells and sometimes retraced their path. The cells did not flex or twitch but occasional filamentous forms present in the group showed slow flexion and extension movement at one end. Occasional isolated coccobacillary forms used to dart away at a great speed towards one direction; none of the cells showed presence of flagella on staining.⁶ The movement lasted till the wet preparations were dry and for maintenance of motility, subcultures of the strains had to be made on fresh medium at an interval of 3–4 days. This technique as compared to others^{1,2} is simple and can be carried out as a routine diagnostic procedure. The observation of gliding motility in *A. anitratus* suggests that it could be a myxobacterium as pointed out by Lautrop.⁷

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